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Arafat acknowledges IDF will not redeploy from all areas

THE Palestinian Authority and Israel have reached a basic understanding on the principle that the IDF will not redeploy from all Palestinian population centers, two Israeli officials have indicated to *The Jerusalem Post*.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres talked for 90 minutes at the Erez crossing yesterday. At a subsequent press conference, they refused to discuss the issue of redeployment. Rather, both announced they would meet again next week with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who is keen on being Israel's top negotiator on this sensitive issue.

While sources say Arafat has come to terms with the principle that redeployment will not be universal, significant gaps still remain about the precise areas from which the IDF will pull out.

"In the end, it will all boil down to specific pieces of geography," a senior official said.

"Arafat has come around to accept that Israel will not redeploy everywhere," another Israeli official said. "But the difference between him and Rabin is this: Arafat says redeployment should occur everywhere, except in those specific problematic areas. Rabin says the reverse: redeployment should not occur except in enumerated areas of agreement."

When asked for a reaction to this principle of selective redeployment, Arafat's spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh said, "There were two meetings today. One was just between Peres and Arafat; the other was the bigger meeting. I can say this did not come up in the bigger meeting. About the other meeting, I cannot say."

DAVID MAKOVSKY

I was not there.

Some believe Arafat will not publicly acknowledge the idea of a selective redeployment until an overall agreement is reached.

At the press conference, Arafat described his session with Peres as "a very important meeting. We can say it was a fruitful meeting."

In his prepared remarks, Arafat insisted he is increasingly concerned about Israeli security.

"My feeling - and I hope that's the feeling of the chairman too - is that we are making progress," Peres said.

"We are now at the beginning of understandings on elections and redeployment," said Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, who participated

in the larger meeting. "If the end is like the beginning, there will be a favorable summary."

Police Minister Moshe Shahal, who participated for the first time, was also optimistic.

Both sides also agreed to create a joint committee to discuss the release of 6,000 Palestinian prisoners.

Sarid said he hopes a ministerial panel to establish criteria for prisoner release will announce some results by next week's meeting among Rabin, Arafat, and Peres.

Peres and Arafat also announced an agreement enabling men over 50 and women over 35 to enjoy "safe passage" between Gaza and Jericho. PLO officials said this would also include officials of the Palestinian Authority and UN. The two also said another industrial park

would be built in Gaza, and Peres said there was agreement more industrial parks would be established in the territories.

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators also met in Cairo yesterday to discuss Palestinian election procedures, but no agreements were reached.

On a related issue, Peres flies to France today, where he will brief President Francois Mitterrand and other senior officials on the peace process. Peres will then continue on to Latin America.

Meanwhile, a diplomatic team flew to Tunisia to discuss the modalities of an Israeli interest section in the Belgian Embassy. A Tunisian team is expected here shortly.

Abed Rabbo calls for halt in talks; Peace Now: Gov't building up settlements, Page 2



OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine makes a point to US Secretary of Defense William Perry yesterday as they view the Golan Heights. (AP)

Perry: Iran a long way from nuclear capability

'Anyone can see strategic importance of the Golan Heights'

ALON PINKAS and DAVID RUDGE

Iran is seven to 15 years away from developing an independent military nuclear capability, but this could be shortened if Iran acquires vital material from countries willing to sell, US Defense Secretary William Perry said yesterday.

"They could take a shortcut if they acquire plutonium or enriched uranium. We are alert to the danger... it is an uncertain process, which depends on outside assistance," Perry told reporters at the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv last night.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said he and Perry exchanged information on Iran's military buildup, both conventional and non-conventional.

"We support President Clinton's policy of dual containment against both Iran and Iraq," Rabin said. "As to the Iranian nuclear efforts, I agree with Secretary Perry's assessment, barring acquisition of materials from Russia and China, which are the countries involved."

The US is working with Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan to prevent Iran from acquiring or developing nuclear weapons. Perry earlier told reporters during a visit to the North.

Perry visited the Ramat David

Air Force Base earlier in the day, where he watched a scramble of F-16 fighters and was given a briefing by OC Air Force Maj.-Gen. Herzl Bodinger. The secretary said he was impressed with the technological innovations made on US-manufactured jets.

"It is good to know that US military assistance is put to good use," Perry said.

This, however, raised the recent controversial issue of Israel's alleged transfer to China of US aircraft technology, reportedly from the development of the defunct Lavi fighter.

"We have a joint committee that would conduct a thorough investigation of any technology transfers," Perry said.

Rabin stressed that Israel does everything in accordance with US guidelines, restrictions, and laws.

"We are not stupid to risk what

we get just for the temptation to sell an item," he said.

Regarding the possibility of stationing American troops on the Golan Heights within the framework of a Syrian-Israeli peace treaty, Perry said anything pertaining to Israel's defense is a matter for the IDF to deal with.

"Our assistance is expressed in maintaining Israel's qualitative advantage. If US troops will be deployed, they will be monitors of a peace agreement, not in any defense role," he emphasized.

At Ramat David earlier, Perry said: "Anyone who goes there [the Golan] can tell just by looking around how strategically located it is."

"We have committed to participate in the implementation of any peace plan in the Golan under several conditions - that a peace plan is reached and signed;

secondly, that both parties request US participation; and third, we would have to consult with the Congress.

"But until we have that peace plan and know the details of what kind of assistance is requested, it is premature for me to try and describe anything more than that," said Perry.

Perry had been flown to an observation point near Kibbutz Misgav Am, where he was briefed on the security situation along the Lebanese border and on the Golan Heights by OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine, accompanied by Deputy Chief of Staff Maj.-Gen. Matan Vilna' and other senior officers and defense officials.

Scores of Golan residents staged a demonstration below the observation site, which overlooks the Lebanese border and the Hula Valley and is directly opposite the Golan.

Russia signs deal to finish Iran nuclear plant

NICOSIA (AP) - Amid mounting concern over Tehran's nuclear ambitions, Iran and Russia have signed an \$800 million deal to complete construction of a nuclear facility halted by the 1979 Islamic revolution.

The Russian decision to sign the deal Sunday was condemned by Iran's largest opposition group in exile, the Baghdad-based Mujahideen Khalq, or People's Holy Warriors.

"Such undertakings only assist the religious-terrorist dictatorship in Iran to pursue expansionist goals to acquire nuclear weaponry," the group's spokesman, Ali Safavi, said yesterday.

Tehran television said the agreement is devoted to peaceful power generation.

Sunday's agreement was signed by Russian Atomic Energy Minister Viktor Mikhailov and the head of Iran's nuclear agency, Reza Amrollahi, according to the television report, monitored by the BBC.

The report said the deal would enable Iran "to make proper and peaceful use of nuclear energy and to provide part of the country's required electricity."

It added that the Russians would "complete and open [the] Bushehr nuclear power station with the participation and cooperation of Iranian experts within the next four years."

Olmert: Eastern Jerusalem zoning plan soon

GOVERNMENT approval of a long-awaited zoning plan encompassing three Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem - largely benefiting Arab residents but also including a small plot owned by Jews - is likely soon, Mayor Ehud Olmert revealed yesterday in an exclusive interview with *The Jerusalem Post*.

Concern over the friction building a Jewish housing project in Ras al-Amud would spark has been the major factor delaying approval.

Olmert, after a meeting with Yitzhak Rabin, who as interior minister must give the final okay for the plan, said he hopes "the plan will no longer be held up."

Rabin is scheduled to tour Jerusalem today as a guest of City Hall, and see first hand the projects for which Olmert has been seeking government funding. The zoning plan Olmert allows for the construction of some

BILL HUTMAN

1,800 new homes for Arabs, most in Ras al-Amud, but also in Silwan and Abu Dis.

A Jewish investor will also be able to build 132 units on a small tract he owns in Ras al-Amud, according to Olmert. The investor is closely affiliated with the Ateret Cohanim group, sources involved in the project said.

Olmert said approval of the plan would be an important step toward easing the housing crunch facing Jerusalem Arabs, and outweighed the implications of the small Jewish housing project.

The Jewish project was originally approved by the administration of former mayor Teddy Kollek.

Olmert also said the Housing Ministry should provide funds for the infrastructure for Arab housing projects in the city, as it does for some Jewish housing projects.

He said that he has already won funding from the Education Ministry for 180 new classrooms in the Arab community, but that in other areas he is still waiting for money from the government.

"I have no doubt about Rabin's commitment to Jerusalem," Olmert said. But Rabin has largely failed to translate that commitment into the financial help the city needs, Olmert added.

Olmert also said that within months the government would have no choice but to "take action against Orient House." For some time, has been calling for the closure of the PLO headquarters in the city.

"Jerusalem is mainly important to the Arabs because it is important to us," Olmert said. He said the Arab world would see a compromise on the Jerusalem issue as a sign that Israel's resolve is weakening, and would then push for more concessions.

Knesset okays Segev appointment as energy minister

LIAT COLLINS and EVELYN GORDON

STRUGGLING to be heard above the boos, Gonen Segev yesterday pledged allegiance and became the minister of energy and infrastructure, the 18th member of Yitzhak Rabin's government.

While Tsomet member Haim Dayan and several Likud MKs shouted "Shame!" and "You have betrayed your voters!" the vote bringing the renegade Tsomet member into the cabinet as a Y'ud minister passed 61 to 44. Y'ud MK Esther Salmovitz voted against; Shas voted in favor.

After the vote, Segev took the empty chair in the row reserved for cabinet members, next to Tourism Minister Uzi Baram. He shook hands with all the ministers, although many who welcomed him had previously refused to give up even part of their (Continued on Page 2)

Health Ministry: No proof home ovulation detecting test works

THE Health Ministry has asked advertisers of an imported device claimed to detect ovulation from a woman's saliva sample to insert a warning on all future ads: "There is no proof this device works."

The ministry has written to Visa, Isracard, and women's magazines that advertised the *Biutur Tester* device, following queries from *The Jerusalem Post* and a ministry investigation of the product.

Dr. Avi Livnat, head of the ministry's medical equipment registration department, noted that he does not yet have the authority to bar sales of the device.

"Today, we have jurisdiction only on equipment used in medical facilities, but a bill before the Knesset will expand our responsibility to all devices relating to health," he said.

However, Livnat noted that the catalogues and magazines would be foolish to continue advertising the product, because women whose unwanted pregnancies result from use of the device could sue them and the importer.

The device, sold for NIS 299 through Visa and Isracard catalogues mailed to their card holders, is imported from California by Talgo Israel Ltd.

JUDY SIEGEL

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The device, sold for NIS 299 through Visa and Isracard catalogues mailed to their card holders, is imported from California by Talgo Israel Ltd.

A simple microscope with a claimed magnification of 30x, it is advertised as being "for home use. With its help, you will know when you ovulate, when there is a possibility of getting pregnant, and when there is the danger of an unwanted pregnancy. It is easy to use: a drop of saliva on the lens of the microscope - and you immediately know if you are fertile or not."

The ad shows a distinctive saliva pattern claimed to signal ovulation and one of little dots supposed to mean the woman has (Continued on Page 2)

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Peace Now: Gov't still building up settlements

THE government is continuing to plan massive construction in the settlements, despite a 1992 pledge to freeze construction, Peace Now leader Tzali Reshef claimed yesterday.

According to Reshef, 11 projects on some 4,000 dunams were deposited with the civil administration last year alone. Some of these projects have already been approved, Reshef said, although he did not spell out which ones.

Ofra Preuss, spokeswoman for Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, declined comment on Reshef's allegations, saying that Ben-Eliezer will give a detailed account of all building taking place in the settlements to the cabinet on Sunday.

Thousands of housing units are being planned in settlements from Kedumim in Samaria to Otzmiel in the Hebron Hills, according to Reshef. "This means there will be 11 more hills of contention

HERB KEINON

[like Givat Hatamar in Efrat]. And this is not taking into consideration Greater Jerusalem, Gush Etzion, and the Jordan Valley," he said.

"I ask myself if the government knows about these plans, or if the bureaucracy just continues to operate as if there is another government," he said.

If the government really intends to halt expansion of settlements, Reshef added, why go ahead with planning them in the first place.

In addition to the 11 projects, Reshef said thousands of dunams have been expropriated for new quarries, roads, and nature reserves.

The expropriation of land for quarries is "stealing for its own sake," said Peace Now spokesman Mossy Raz, since this can not be explained as necessary for

strategic needs.

"Plans for the construction of thousands of new homes, together with expropriating roads to serve the settlers, and additional expropriation of thousands of dunams for other uses demonstrate an intention to deepen Israel's hold upon the occupied territories," Peace Now wrote in a document it prepared on the matter.

"Such activities, during the interim period especially, create the impression that Israel's goal is to maintain the occupation, and certainly not to evacuate settlements."

Alice Shazar, spokeswoman for the civil administration, responded by saying that building plans are not approved by the civil administration, but by a special governmental committee headed by Noah Kinarti, the prime minister's adviser on settlements.

Jericho conference calls for halt in talks until building stops

JON IMMANUEL

WHILE Israel and the Palestinian Authority negotiated in Gaza yesterday, a conference in Jericho sponsored by the PA called for suspension of talks with Israel until settlement building stops. It declared a general protest strike for next Sunday.

Settlements, despite their high profile during the past two weeks, were hardly mentioned in the talks between PA Chairman Yasser Arafat and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

PA Information Minister Yasser Abed-Rabbo, who normally accompanies Arafat to his meetings with Israeli leaders, participated in the Jericho conference instead. Its original date was changed to compete with the Gaza meeting.

"We start the confrontation with the settlements today," Abed-Rabbo warned publicly. "There will be no real peace if building continues on Palestinian

land." He supported the conference call for suspending talks, according to Fatah secretary Marwan Barghouti.

Abed-Rabbo heads the Palestinian Democratic Union Party (Fida), Fatah's junior partner in the peace process.

The conference also called for establishing a higher committee on settlements similar to one established on behalf of prisoners, Barghouti said.

The conference was billed as a national conference open to all, but the 500-seat Rivoli Cinema where it was held was only two-thirds full, many of those present villagers who had land expropriated recently.

A large picture of Arafat formed a backdrop, framed by the phrase, "No peace with settlements."

The Jerusalem Mufti Akrim

Sabri, appointed by Arafat, chaired the conference, which was attended by Hanan Ashrawi, PLO Executive Committee member Suleiman Najjab, Jerusalem Hamas personality Jamil Hamami, Hebron Mayor Mustafa Natshe, Barghouti, Transport Minister Hafez Ashab and others.

"We should limit the speeches and work practically to urge people to stand together as they did for seven years," said Ashrawi, commissioner-general of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights, alluding to the intifada. "We are not a people without land and our land is not without people."

Demonstrations against settlement took place briefly and without violence yesterday near Efrat in Gush Etzion and Otzmiel in the Hebron hills.

One questioner called for establishing a Palestinian land fund "like Israel's Keren Kayemet [JNF]."

Najjab, leader of the Palestinian People's Party, which opposes the Cairo agreement, said that Israel's settlement plans show it is trying to create "ghettos" or cantons. "We have to suspend the talks to give the international community a shock," he said.

A poll taken by the Center for Palestinian Research and Studies one week after the El-Khader-Efrat dispute began on December 22 showed that 31.5% support a suspension of the negotiations "until Israel observes the Oslo Accords." Another 20.6% want the talks halted for good. With 9.2% having no opinion, only 38.7% support the talks.

Elena Bonner: Israel shouldn't rush into peace

BATSHEVA TSUR

PEACE between Israel and its Arab neighbors is contingent on a number of conditions, but it appears that these conditions can be easily pushed aside, Elena Bonner, widow of Andrei Sakharov, said yesterday.

She was speaking at a Jerusalem conference to mark the 20th anniversary of the Johnson-Vanik Amendment.

"I believe in peace and human rights," Bonner said. "But there is no need to explain that peace means an end to violence, no more shooting."

"It's a mistake for Israel to be easily moved [when the other side is] not sticking to the rules of the agreement."

Bonner, who has family living in a community across the Green Line, said: "I crossed this beautiful land and could not understand why it was called 'territories' and the villages and towns there called 'settlements.' In Russia, people go from prison to 'settlements.' Why does my grandson Avshalom Sakharov have to live in a so-called settlement?"

Bonner said that she had visited the Golan Heights and seen the Syrian border town of Kuneitra. "I asked why this town is dead," she said. "Perhaps it is because the Syrians don't need it? If they do, why don't they turn it into a living town?"



Police sappers check the donkey involved in yesterday's bomb attack outside Kfar Darom. There were no injuries in the blast, which occurred when the donkey cart, packed with orange crates concealing some 70 kg. of explosives, blew up. (Reuters)

Boobytrapped donkey cart explodes near settlers' school bus

HERB KEINON

A RIGGED donkey cart exploded yesterday morning near Kfar Darom just as an Egged school bus carrying children from the settlement was passing by.

There were no injuries or damage, said Dalia Herszkowitz, spokeswoman for the Gaza Coast Regional Council.

According to Herszkowitz, the donkey cart — covered with oranges — hid some 40 kilograms of explosives operated by remote control and timed to go off at 7:25. Only seven of the 40 kg. exploded.

Herszkowitz said the explosive was set to go off just as an IDF escort jeep and two buses, one from Ashkelon and one from Beersheba, passed the site. The bomb exploded a few meters from the bus.

"It was a miracle that the buses and the jeep were not damaged," Herszkowitz said. The donkey was also not hurt.

According to Gaza Coast Regional Council head Zvi Hendel this is just one in a series of violent incidents that have increased considerably since at least 14 people were killed in

November in a clash between the Palestinian Police and Hamas at a Gaza mosque.

Hendel said that Arafat gave a directive following this incident to Fatah Hawks to carry their weapons freely. "I thought he was trying to protect himself," Hendel said, "but he was actually trying to win public support by encouraging attacks on Israelis."

According to statistics supplied by Hendel at a Jerusalem press conference yesterday, there were 14 shootings and explosions in the 50 days preceding the mosque clash, and 31 since then.

Hendel said that senior security sources have recommended to the government that — on the basis of the experience in Gaza since the implementation of the autonomy accords — the government should slow things down in the peace process until the Palestinian Authority proves it is able to control the situation on the ground.

"The government has to take itself seriously

and stop for a minute," Hendel said. "Jericho and Gaza were to be testing grounds. Show me one person who says the test has succeeded. The government should slow down, because things in Judea and Samaria will be seven times more difficult than they are in Gaza."

In a related matter, Hendel said that the quantity and quality of arms being smuggled into Gaza from Egypt has increased substantially since the implementation of autonomy. He said the arms are being smuggled through tunnels and brought in over the security fence. He said that anti-tank mines are among the weaponry that has been smuggled.

Evelyn Gordon adds:

Shas yesterday announced that it would not accept a withdrawal by the IDF from Arab population centers in the territories before bypass roads around these cities were completed. To do so, the party said, would create so great a risk that it would outweigh any chance of saving lives provided by the agreement with the PLO.

Rabin takes on hecklers at tribute to 'Scoop' Jackson

DAVID MAKOVSKY

THOSE who call the government "a minority government" because it leans on Arab MKs are guilty of at least "slight racism," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin charged yesterday.

He was speaking at a Jerusalem conference to mark the 20th anniversary of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.

Rabin's tribute to the late Sen. Henry (Scoop) Jackson, a champion of Soviet Jewish immigration, was marred by a dozen or so hecklers in a crowd of about a 100.

Three of the hecklers, who shouted epithets at Rabin at the start of his remarks, including one who called him a "murderer" and a "drunk," were either dragged or escorted out by police.

The heckling began in earnest

after Rabin finished his tribute to Jackson and began talking about the Middle East. Instead of ignoring the hecklers, Rabin challenged them, increasingly expressing his annoyance.

When one charged he is leading a minority government, Rabin replied: "Any citizen has the right to participate in decisions ... I am sorry that an element of slight racism is being brought up here."

Rabin said that no Israeli was killed by a Fatah member last year. Rather, he said that 90% of attacks were perpetrated by Hamas, and the remainder were perpetrated by rejectionist splinters of the PLO opposed to the Oslo Accord.

"We have to know who the

enemy is. The enemy is not [Syrian President Hafez] Assad, not [PLO Chairman Yasser] Arafat, and not [Lebanese President Elias] Hrawi, it is the radical Islamic extremists."

When a heckler charged he was covering up for the PLO, Rabin retorted angrily, "You are talking nonsense. Those who killed in the Afula, Hadera, and Tel Aviv bombings came from areas under our control. I guess you think those who are involved in terror against [Egyptian President Hosni] Mubarak are also from the PLO?"

Helen Jackson, the honoree at the conference was embarrassed by the hecklers. She said afterwards, "I just hate to see him treated in this fashion because he has devoted his life to this country. I think he handled it well."

MIA families call for linkage to Syrian talks

FAMILIES of MIAs have called on Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin not to continue the peace process with Syria until their sons are returned. The call came as the family and friends of Zvi Feldman, for the 13th time since he was declared missing in action, celebrated his birthday. He is 38. US Defense Secretary William Perry declined to speak to family members who waited for him at his hotel last night.

PA ministers meet with Berlin officials

A Berlin Municipality delegation met with four Palestinian Authority representatives in the Ambassador Hotel in eastern Jerusalem yesterday evening, despite Israeli policy not to allow the PA to hold meetings of a governmental nature in Jerusalem.

CORRECTION

Prof. Shmarya Gutman is alive and well in Kibbutz Na'an and working on his fourth book, and not as reported in Snyia Shapiro's article, "Tale of zealots told in a northern fortress," which appeared Sunday on Page 7. We regret the error.

SEGEV

(Continued from Page 1) portfolios for him. Moshe Shalal will today officially hand over the Energy Ministry to Segev and return to being full-time police minister. Rabin still holds four portfolios.

Segev remained calm despite the display of animosity by former friends. "I can understand it. It came from those who had nothing to say [Tsomet leader] Rafael Eitan also tried to sign with Rabin after all," he told reporters. "I don't think I'm going against my ideology. I think by going into the coalition I can help the right-wing."

He said he had not discussed joining the coalition until four months after he left Tsomet.

Last week Rabin appointed Yit'ud MK Alex Goldfarb deputy minister of construction and housing, a post which did not require a Knesset vote.

The vote on Segev's appoint-

ment was made possible after Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair announced yesterday that a preliminary police investigation of two complaints against Segev had not turned up anything that would justify delaying the appointment.

While the police have not finished the preliminary investigation, Ben-Yair said, they have so far found no grounds for a more thorough investigation.

The two complaints, filed by Likud MK Limor Livnat, both stemmed from Segev's work as a medical consultant at the Hamat Gader spa.

One complaint, based on anonymous reports from Holocaust victims who are entitled to visit the spa at government expense, charged Segev took bribes from patients in exchange for letting

them take their 21-day stays in two parts.

The second complaint charged he was being paid more than an MK is entitled to earn from outside work.

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THE BEREAVED FAMILY

1501 من الامان

Knesset panel disclaims existence of Russian mafia in Israel

THERE IS no Russian mafia in Israel, but there is a stigma attached to the newcomers from the former Soviet Union.

This is the main conclusion of the Knesset Aliya and Absorption Committee, which met yesterday to discuss media reports on organized crime, prostitution, and drug rings run by immigrants.

"There is no official report on the numbers of criminals from the former Soviet Union, but the figure is probably only in the hundreds and not proportionately different from any other ethnic group of immigrants," said police intelligence officer Lt.-Cmdr. Hazi Leder.

Discussion focused on chairman Emanuel Zissman's request that the bodies dealing with immigration use the clause in the Law of Return which allows a potential immigrant to be rejected if he happens to have a criminal

LIAT COLLINS

record. "We need to prevent the immigration of those who can endanger the public, and stop a stigma being attached to an entire group," Zissman said.

But relying on previous criminal records is not always possible in former totalitarian states, according to Yasha Kedmi, director of the Immigrants Liaison Bureau. Some refugees had been imprisoned on trumped-up charges, including rape, and ended up with a criminal record, he said.

The speakers blasted media reports on organized crime, such as Ilana Dayan's *Fact* on Channel 2 last week and a recent *Yedioth Aharanot* article entitled "The Russian mafia will turn Israel into a hell of crime."

"If these reports were printed abroad about Jews, or here about any other ethnic group, the Knesset would be in an uproar," said Dov Shilansky (Likud).

In an emotional plea to stop the press attacks, Sofia Landover, head of the Soviet Immigrants Association, asked: "What sin am I guilty of? Why do children have to come home from school with the cries, 'Your mother is a whore and your father's an alcoholic' ringing in their ears? Why can't I walk out in the street or take a taxi without being accused of being a prostitute. This immigration is the best there is - engineers, doctors, professionals. What did we bring them here for, to sweep the streets and be insulted?"

Benny Temkin (Meretz) called the stigmatization, isolation, and frustration of the immigrants "a social time bomb."

Lass: One law needed for AIDS victims' rights

LIAT COLLINS

ONE law should cover all aspects of AIDS victims' rights instead of three laws currently in force or under consideration, MK Yoram Lass (Labor) told the Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee yesterday.

Lass said a subcommittee should be established to deal with the proposed legislation on all AIDS issues such as AIDS detection and AIDS victims' rights.

Among the subjects discussed yesterday were the problems of workers dismissed because they carry the HIV virus, the difficulties

of schoolchildren who have the disease, and the right of minors to be tested for AIDS without their parents' permission.

"The risk of AIDS infection in schools is negligible. A pupil should not be removed from classes just because he has the infection," said Prof. Zvi Bentovitch, director of the AIDS Center. He said every effort should be made to encourage children who require testing to speak with their parents, but accepted the

suggestion by MK Benny Temkin (Meretz) that in the case of minors, welfare workers could be authorized to perform the test instead, if necessary.

A support team should be on hand when a patient is informed of positive AIDS tests result, said MK Naomi Blumenthal (Likud).

MK Meir Sheerit (Likud) defended infected employees' rights to remain at work as long as they are physically able. Representatives of the AIDS Association said victims must be eligible for decent working conditions.

Man remanded on suspicion of bugging phones, blackmail

RAINE MARCUS

A MAN working as a private investigator, but without a license, who is suspected of tapping the phones of private detective Michel Hadad and blackmailing him by threatening to expose personal information, was remanded for nine days by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Moshe Kahan, 47, was originally arrested late last week together with private detective

Lavana Hartabi, but was hospitalized following a heart attack. Hartabi was remanded for 10 days last week.

Kahan allegedly tapped Hadad's phone and then together with Hartabi threatened to give the tapes to a newspaper if he did not pay them.

Hadad, a former police officer,

filed a complaint.

According to a police representative, Kahan told Hadad that each of the three tapes was worth \$15,000, and that all tapes had been handed over to a crime reporter. A police inquiry revealed that the reporter, Buki Nae, had not received any tapes.

Judge Gila Neufeld ruled that police have sufficient evidence implicating Kahan.

Defense asks court to drop wiretapping case

RAINE MARCUS

THE defense lawyers for private investigators Rafi Friedman and Ya'acov Tsur, charged with 40 counts of tapping phones, mobile phones and faxes of hundreds of media personnel, businessmen and politicians, yesterday asked a Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court judge to cancel the proceedings.

The request followed the refusal of prosecutor Rafi Levy to transfer all relevant prosecution evidence to the defense, despite a

ruling three weeks ago by Judge Zecharia Caspi.

Defense counsels Moti Katz and Dan Qual said they had heard on the radio that the state attorney is planning to petition the high court of justice to grant confidentiality to part of evidence, so they want to hand it over.

Katz asked Caspi to cancel

proceedings against Friedman and Tsur until the High Court gives its ruling, claiming that "it is inconceivable that the prosecution totally ignores a judge's decision, and refuses to hand over crucial evidence."

If Caspi agrees, the state would have to start the whole process over - file a new charge sheet, etc. - whatever the court rules.

Meanwhile, police are still conducting their investigation into who commissioned Friedman and Tsur, but have no admissible evidence, despite statements by prosecution witnesses against a newspaper publisher.

Caspi will give his ruling on the request to cancel criminal proceedings on January 19, and asked Levy to inform him of his decision regarding the transfer of evidence by January 15.



Foreign Minister Shimon Peres tries on a ceremonial outfit presented to him by Abilsh Kekilbaev, the visiting head of the Kazakhstani parliament, yesterday. (Isaac Harari)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Worker's army profile now confidential

The law banning an employer from demanding to see a potential worker's military medical profile passed second and third reading in the Knesset last night.

"The new law will protect the basic rights of a person to privacy particularly in medical matters," said MK Yossi Katz, chairman of the Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee. "The military profile is not intended for civilian use and needs."

The bill was proposed by MK Yoram Lass (Labor).

Ravid leaving Maccabi

Prof. Mordechai Ravid has resigned as deputy medical director of the Maccabi health fund and will return to Kupat Holim Clalit's Meir Hospital, where he will head an internal medicine department. Ravid, who 15 months ago resigned as chairman of a different internal medicine department at Meir to join Maccabi, explained that he is leaving the health fund because of "professional differences."

Animal Rights Day under way

More than 100,000 cats and kittens are abandoned by their owners every year, according to Lev Lechal, an animal welfare group specializing in felines. The figures were released as part of a public awareness campaign for today's Animal Rights Day. The day's events, organized by Noah, the Federation of Animal Welfare Groups in Israel, include information booths at shopping malls and other public centers, a Knesset discussion, and media programs.

Aloni attacks Beilin over Law of Return

Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni yesterday strongly attacked Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin for suggesting that those with one Jewish grandparent no longer be included in the Law of Return. She told Israel Radio Beilin was trying to satisfy the same rabbi that booted him at a recent conference, not letting him speak.

Beduin agree to land compromise

Negev Beduin families living in tents near Ashdod - in violation of a High Court ruling - agreed yesterday to move temporarily to state land near Ramat Gan, after Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer promised to find a permanent agricultural settlement for them within two weeks. The agreement, mediated by MKs Tamar Gozansky (Hadas) and Taleb a-Sanana (Democratic Arab Party), is considered a breakthrough for the Azazmech tribe, which has been insisting on settling in an agricultural setting and not in one of the seven Beduin towns in the Negev.

Amir Rozenblit

Deri Prosecutor: Hecht misled commission

Prosecutor Yehoshua Reznick yesterday told Jerusalem District Court that state's witness Avraham Hecht had misled the Ziv Commission in its investigation of land purchases at Nebi Samwil, the focus of former interior minister Aryeh Deri's trial on fraud and other corruption charges. Reznick said that Hecht, who is not being prosecuted for bribing co-defendant Moshe Weinberg in exchange for his testimony, gave the commission a list of his Moresheet Binyamin housing company's customers that deliberately included purchasers of land at another site. Hecht testified that the commission knew which names pertained to which purchase.

Itim

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the 10 of spades, nine of hearts, jack of diamonds, and nine of clubs.

KEREN KAYEMETH LEISRAEL - JEWISH NATIONAL FUND

Planting for Peace on the Festival of Trees

Tu B'Shvat 1995

טו בשבט תשנ"ה

PLANTING FOR PEACE

This year's tree planting season will be held under the banner of "Planting for Peace." Some 500,000 people, including school children and adults, soldiers, new immigrants, tourists and students, will participate in tree planting events throughout Israel.

In total, JNF will plant 3 million saplings over some 30,000 dunams all over the country, among them 10,000 dunams in the south in the context of its efforts to halt desertification processes.

The public is invited to participate in tours and tree planting events organized jointly with the Government Information Center and the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption.

STOP!
AND PLANT FOR PEACE

Motorists traveling on Tu B'Shvat can stop and fulfill the tree planting mitzvah at one of three centers, between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm.

Northern Region: Halafta Junction, on the Amiad-Karmiel Highway.

Central Region: The Pizzim Monument Recreation Area, on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv Highway (near Shaveh).

Southern Region: Near Yotvata Fortress, at Givat Junction, on the Pithul-Ashkelon Highway.

Lehavim Junction: Beit Kama Beersheba Highway.

Tour with KKL-JNF and plant for Peace GUIDED PUBLIC TOURS

JNF invites the public to participate in tours to various sites in Israel during the week of Tu B'Shvat. Tours will include tree planting.

NORTHERN REGION:

Monday, Tu B'Shvat, 16.1.95: To Ein Ze'elim, Bat Yair, Binyatona, Ben Uzziel Tomb, Rosh Pina.

Wednesday, 18.1.95: To Halafta Forest, Goren Park, Hahayon Junction, Tower and Stockade, Yehoram Forest and Artisans' House at Hazeret Yotv.

CENTRAL REGION:

Monday, Tu B'Shvat, 16.1.95: Departing from Tel Aviv, to the Shazar Hagai area, on to Beit Shemesh, Adullam area, Massus Observation Lookout, tree plantings in the Haruvim area, Beit Govrin, a visit to the new Tel Meneha archaeological excavations, return to Tel Aviv.

Departing from Jerusalem, travel through Ein Karem area, Safat (viewpoint), Martyn's Forest, Ramat Raziel, Eshkol tree nursery, a visit to the Beit Govrin archaeological excavations, then on to the Yotv Forest for a tree planting ceremony and Tu B'Shvat festivities, return to Jerusalem.

SOUTHERN REGION:

Monday, Tu B'Shvat, 16.1.95: To Lahav Forest, Joe Alon Beduin Museum, Abu Hail Ruins, via a new scenic route from Meitar to Yotv, concluding with an artistic performance - a festival of nature and music in Yotv Forest.

Friday, 20.1.95: To the western Negev - tree planting in Shashereh Forest, JNF Tree nursery at Gilat, Sayaret Shaked Park and Nahal Besor water reservoirs.

- Tour Registration no later than 3:00 pm, Thursday, 12.1.95.
- Departure Time: 8:00 am. Scheduled return: late afternoon.
- Please prepare your own food and beverages. Make sure to wear suitable clothing as per prevailing weather conditions.

Departure sites for Guided Tours

Jerusalem from JNF Head Office, 45 King George Street.

Tel Aviv from JNF Offices, 96 Yarkon Street.

Halafta from JNF Offices, Beit Kranot, 16 Herzl Street.

Beersheba from JNF Offices, 112 Histadruth Street.

For registration and information please telephone the following numbers between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm:

Jerusalem: 02-707411, 291333

Tel Aviv: 03-5234367

Halafta: 04-641297

Beersheba: 07-276282

Participation Fee: NIS 25 (excluding food), per person.

Israel Educational T.V.

ISOL-JNF's film on *Halafta Lake* will be aired on Friday, 13.1.95 between 10:00 am and 11:00 am during Educational T.V.'s "HaKol Patnach" program which is being devoted to Environmental Quality.

Tree-Planting Train

This tree planting and broadcast event is sponsored jointly by Galei Tzahal, Israel Railways and JNF.

Soldiers and schoolchildren will depart by train for Jerusalem from Tel Aviv.

The train will stop at four sites along the route, and passengers will plant saplings.

At the end of the day's tree plantings, the train will return to the Tel Aviv South station, where an artistic program will be held.

During the Festival of Trees, we shall plant and offer a prayer for the welfare and safe return of all prisoners of war and those missing in action.

Trial of accused sheikh, followers in attempted NY bombings begins

THE terror conspiracy trial of Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman and 11 of his followers - accused of plotting to bomb a series of New York landmarks in an attempt to overthrow the US - began yesterday amid heavy security, in the biggest terrorism trial in the nation's history.

Citizens called for jury duty in the case lined up by the dozens outside the federal court building in Manhattan yesterday morning. Police barricades were erected to keep photographers across the street.

Jury selection began at 10:45 a.m. Potential jurors were expected to be questioned closely about their views of Islam, Arabs and the Middle East.

Government lawyers charge that Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman and 11 of his followers conspired to bomb targets that included the United Nations, the FBI headquarters in Manhattan and the Lincoln and Holland tunnels, which are normally crowded with commuters.

Prosecutors also allege that some of the

NEWS AGENCIES
NEW YORK

defendants participated in the earlier assassination of Rabbi Meir Kahane as a prelude to wider violence that included bombing the World Trade Center and plotting to kill Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak during a visit to New York.

The reason: "To the Jihad organization, the United States, Egypt and Israel are simply different parts of a single enemy on whom they are obliged to wage war," government lawyers charge in court papers.

What is likely to emerge during months of testimony in the federal courthouse at Manhattan's Foley Square is a portrait of a terrorist cell, fueled by religious fanaticism and hatred of the United States, Israel and Mubarak's regime.

Unlike last year's trade center bombing trial in which four of the sheik's followers were convicted largely on forensic evidence,

jurors will see FBI videotapes of some of the defendants mixing explosives, hear about scouting trips to potential bomb sites - including the tunnels and New York's predominantly Jewish diamond district - and learn that the accused terrorists, constantly feared their phones and meetings were monitored by authorities.

The government's case rests heavily on testimony from a former Egyptian army commando and intelligence operative, Emad Ali Salem, who infiltrated the alleged conspiracy and who served as adviser and bodyguard to Abdel Rahman, the principal defendant.

According to court papers, prosecutors will try to show that Abdel Rahman was the spiritual leader of an organization of "radical Islamic extremists" with members in California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, Michigan and other states.

Abdel Rahman directed that all members should prepare for "jihad," or holy war, against the West through paramilitary training for terrorist acts, prosecutors allege.

Egyptian police kill three suspected militants

ASSIUT, Egypt (Reuters) - Police shot dead three youths thought to be Moslem militants in an exchange of fire in southern Egypt yesterday, the interior ministry said.

The youths, aged 17, 20 and 22, had been hiding in an abandoned building in the middle of fields near Saw village in Assiut province about 280 kilometers south of Cairo, security sources said.

Police believe they were members of the military wing of the militant Gama'a al-Islamiya, the largest organization fighting the security forces, the sources added.

An Interior Ministry statement said a police unit came across them while searching the fields and the militants opened fire in an attempt to escape. Police re-

turned the fire.

It said the three men had taken part in recent acts of violence in the neighboring province of Minya, where on January 2 suspected militants dragged eight policemen off buses and killed them in front of other passengers.

In the building police found two automatic rifles, a revolver, four full magazines of ammunition and forged documents, the statement said. The security sources said they also found a forged passport and money including US dollars.

Police think the youths had recruited new members for the Gama'a and had handled contacts between Gama'a units in Assiut and those in other provinces along the Nile Valley as far north as Cairo, the sources added.

In a shootout on the outskirts of Cairo on Sunday, police shot dead five suspected Moslem militants. It was the first operation against militants in the capital this year.

Later on Sunday gunmen shot dead a sugar factory worker in the south and security sources said they suspected militants attacked him in the belief he was collaborating with the police.

One woman passerby was wounded in the attack, which took place in the village of Estay in Minya province, about 240 kilometers south of Cairo, they said.

The latest deaths bring the death toll from political violence in Egypt to about 700 since the Gama'a began a campaign to overthrow the government in 1992.

Top E. Germans accused in Wall deaths

BERLIN (AP) - Prosecutors announced charges yesterday against seven former East German leaders in connection with deaths of people fleeing the communist country.

A separate report, meanwhile, said 584 people died in escape attempts during East Germany's 41 years of existence. The number has increased steadily since German unification in 1990 as researchers discover new information in mountains of secret records.

The Berlin Justice Department said seven former members of the Politburo of the East German Communist Party were accused of multiple counts of manslaughter and attempted manslaughter at the inner-German border including the Berlin Wall.

The wall stood from 1961 until 1989 when a popular revolution forced its opening and eventually toppled the Communists.

The names of the accused were not immediately released. The Justice Department said all of them had to be informed of the accusations before more details would be made public.

The announcement of charges marks the second legal drive against top East German figures. In 1992, Communist leader Erich Honecker and five others were put on trial for manslaughter, accused of giving border guards shoot-to-kill orders.

That trial ended messily with only three convictions as Honecker and two other aged figures were excused on grounds of ill health. Honecker died of liver cancer last year in Chilean exile.

Prosecutions of border guards have continued, meanwhile, and in Berlin the 22nd such trial is under way. Most of the trials have ended with suspended sentences, though several former guards have been sent to prison

for killings dating back to the 1960s.

Such trials have led to complaints that prosecutors were going after the "little fish" while responsible East German leaders got away unpunished.

Manfred Kittlaus, head of the staff investigating East German government criminality, said in a report issued Sunday that prosecutors are indeed going after higher-ups. Investigations have zeroed in on 213 suspects from the rank of lieutenant colonel up to Cabinet ministers, he said.

Kittlaus, in a quarterly report, said the number of would-be escapees' deaths had risen by 50 to 584 since his last report. It said 369 people had been shot to death, 41 were killed by mines and the rest died in other ways including drownings in attempts to escape via the Baltic Sea. Also, 757 people were wounded.

New York City's crime rate fell in 1994

NEW YORK (Reuters) - New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said on Saturday that the number of violent crimes in the city declined significantly last year.

He hailed the decline as a success story for the city. The drop in murder and robbery was "the largest simultaneous decrease in these two categories in recent memory," the mayor said at a City Hall news conference.

He predicted it would have a substantial impact on tourism.

Giuliani said last year's FBI crime statistics for large cities in America showed that New York was "just about the safest. Those numbers are getting better, not worse," he said.

New York did not feature in the top 15 of the US's most dangerous cities with populations over 100,000. Atlanta, Miami and St Louis were the top three.

With Police Commissioner William Bratton at his side, the mayor also said that crime was down in every single precinct. "This is all very encouraging... and should make people feel confident," he said.

The mayor said the decline in crime became more significant in the last four months of 1994, with homicides down by 35 percent.

A police department comparison chart showed 1,581 murders in New York last year, compared with 1,946 in 1993. Robbery went down from 85,883 in 1993 to 72,559 last year.

New York City's overall crime rate showed a 12.3 percent decline, the mayor said.

The statistics track seven major felonies. It showed a decrease in the areas of murder, robbery, rape, burglary, felony assault, grand larceny and grand theft auto.



Peter Cook (right) here seen with partner-in-comedy Dudley Moore during filming for their BBC TV series 'Not Only But Also'.

Veteran British satirist Peter Cook dies at 57

LONDON (Reuters) - Peter Cook, hailed as founding father of contemporary British satire and famed for his comedy partnership with actor Dudley Moore, died suddenly yesterday of a gastrointestinal hemorrhage at the age of 57.

Cook, who rocketed to fame as a student wit and then spearheaded Britain's satire boom in the "Swinging Sixties," influenced a whole generation of comedians but never capitalized on his early success.

"I think I ran out of ambition at 24," the disheveled comedian once confessed after Dudley Moore departed for a career of international fame as an unlikely Hollywood heartthrob.

But Cook left behind him one enduring monument to his acidic humor - he founded the satirical magazine *Private Eye* whose editor Ian Hislop said yesterday: "He was an extraordinary proprietor. He never interfered, he never complained."

"It was sad he never really lived up to his potential because he seemed to enjoy life more than work," BBC producer Harry Thompson said of the comedian so often seen with a drink in one hand and a cigarette in the other.

Fellow satirist Ned Sherrin said of Cook: "Obviously he was the first, he was the governor."

BBC television chief Alan Yentob said: "Peter Cook was an absolute one-off, a unique comic talent whose influence on succeeding generations of television writers and performers is immeasurable."

Cook broke new ground in the Sixties in the student revue "Beyond the Fringe" that transferred to London's West End and New York's Broadway. His most riotous cameo was portraying Prime Minister Harold Macmillan as a rambling buffoon.

After his meteoric rise to fame, Cook founded The Establishment, billed as Britain's first satirical club, as well as a New York club and an off-Broadway theatre.

Poll: Prince Charles has damaged monarchy

LONDON (AP) - Prince Charles has done more damage to the monarchy than any other member of the royal family, according to participants in a poll published yesterday.

The poll for *The Guardian* newspaper also found that two-thirds were opposed to royals having relationships outside marriage, as Charles has admitted doing.

Asked who had most damaged the monarchy, 51 percent named Charles. Twenty percent picked "Fergie," the duchess of York, while 14 percent named Charles' estranged wife, Princess Diana.

Sixty-six percent said the royal family should set a moral example by not having relationships outside marriage. Charles publicly admitted last year that he had had an affair after his marriage had broken down.

However, 63 percent thought that Charles should still become king even if he and Diana divorce. They've been separated since December 1992.

Only 27 percent of those polled thought Britain would be better off without the royal family, up from 20 percent in 1992.

Asked which members of the royal family were doing a good job, 72 percent named Queen Elizabeth II and 67 percent mentioned her daughter, Princess Anne. Charles and Diana lagged behind at 35 percent each, while 3 percent thought the duchess of York was doing a good job.

The poll by ICM was based on interviews with 1,003 people age 15 or older, between December 14 and 16, and had a margin of error of about three percentage points.

O.J. Simpson writing a book

WILLIAM CLAIBORNE and DAVID STREITFIELD
WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON - O.J. Simpson is writing a book to answer the 300,000 pieces of mail he has received since his arrest last June. It was probably one letter in particular that really energized him: the bill from his legal team.

Titled *I Want to Tell You*, the book is expected to feature the unsurprising declaration that Simpson is innocent. It will appear next month, right about when his trial for murder is supposed to begin.

Besides coming up with a quick fix for Simpson's lawyers, the book will be another salvo in the public-relations war between the defendant and the prosecution. Already Sunday there was speculation that the prosecutors would seek out an early copy of the manuscript and that the trial would be delayed.

Little, Brown, which is issuing the Simpson book, says it is printing 500,000 copies. Presumably that means Simpson will be getting significantly more than \$1 million, although he'll doubtless have to share a chunk with co-writer Lawrence Schiller.

A package of literary projects best known for his work with Norman Mailer on *Marilyn* and *The Executioner's Song*, Schiller is a former neighbor of Simpson's.

Early reaction to the book ranged from outright condemnations - "disgusting... outrageous," Fred Goldman, the father of victim Ron Goldman, told KABC-TV in Los Angeles - to cautious predictions.

"Even if people are a little upset he's writing it, they'll still buy it," said Shirley Smyth, a manager at the Tattered Cover in Den-

ver, one of the country's largest bookstores.

This is apparently the first time a murder defendant has published a book during his trial. Usually, the defendant waits until it's over. If found guilty, he frequently doesn't get a chance at all.

The book is only the latest moneymaking venture Simpson has launched from his jail cell to offset mounting legal bills and dwindling personal assets.

Last month, a Los Angeles firm began marketing a 21-inch-high, 30-pound bronze sculpture of "The Juice" wearing his trademark No. 32 football jersey and holding a football on his hip.

Simpson, whose autograph is inscribed at the base, will receive an unspecified percentage of the sales, according to the marketing firm that designed the statue with suggestions from Simpson as he awaited trial.

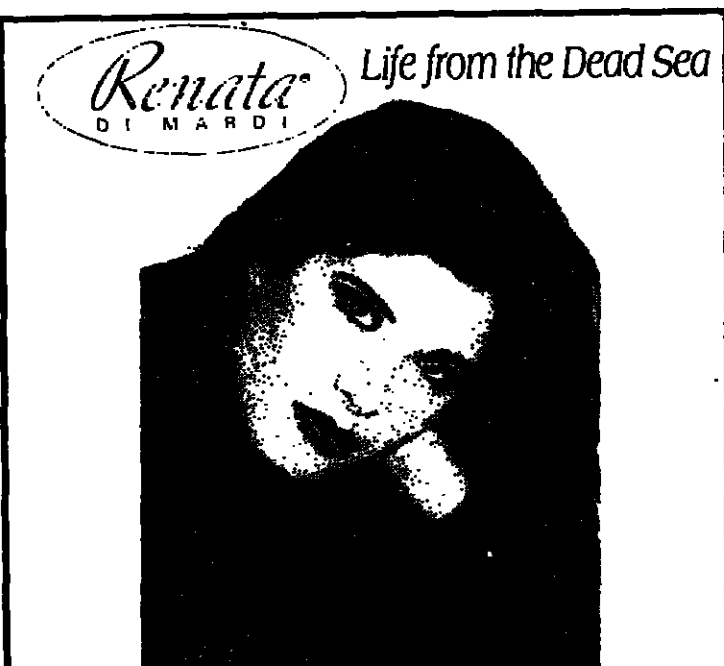
Also last month, a coin commemorating Simpson's record 1973 rushing season with the Buffalo Bills went on the market with Simpson's approval of the design and marketing strategy.

The Buffalo and Provo, Utah, businessmen who are jointly marketing the coins have said that all 6,000 have been sold, at a cost of \$69.95 each in gold and \$34.95 in silver.

Simpson is receiving an undisclosed amount in royalties.

Last summer, Simpson, fulfilling a contract he signed before he was arrested, was reported to have autographed more than 2,800 football trading cards in his jail cell. They were sold to collectors around the country.

The Washington Post



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School principal keeps promise, eats worm

SUMMIT, Illinois (AP) - Wearing a pink cape and antennae, Tom Dixey put a nice, juicy mealworm in his mouth and swallowed.

That's the price of a bet with teenagers.

About 450 of Argo Community High School's 1,500 students combined to meet his challenge to read 4,000 literary works. Dixey, the assistant principal, had promised to eat an insect if they did. He ended up eating two raw worms - the first bite was broadcast nationally on CBS Friday morning, and the second was for the students.

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A special supplement on the fair will be published with

The Jerusalem Post on March 10
The Jerusalem Post International edition on March 13.

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Russian forces battle to take Grozny city center

BARRY RENFREW
GROZNY, Russia

RUSSIAN tanks and artillery hammered the city center with hundreds of shells and rockets yesterday as outnumbered Chechen rebels battled to hold the presidential palace and other key installations.

The heart of the shattered city reverberated with machine-gun and rifle fire as Russian and Chechen troops battled for the palace and surrounding buildings.

Chechen fighters armed with rocket grenades ducked in and out of shattered buildings, trying to knock out Russian tanks blasting their positions. Artillery shells and rockets slammed into buildings around the palace as huge plumes of black smoke towered over the city.

There were strong indications of preparations for another major assault.

Several Russian armored battalions with dozens of T-72 tanks and armored personnel carriers were seen moving toward Grozny. Russian troops and armored personnel carriers dug in at new locations around the city.

Large Russian transport planes carrying troops and supplies



Two Chechen fighters drag a wounded comrade into the relative safety of a building close to the presidential palace in Grozny yesterday. Russian tanks and artillery continued to pound the city center as forces closed in for the final assault.

landed every 30 minutes at two nearby Russian air bases, apparently ferrying in more reinforcements for the offensive that began December 11.

With international cries for a halt to the bloodshed growing, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin reportedly said Russian leaders were set to order a two-day cease-fire in order to retrieve the bodies of those killed.

"This is only the beginning of the negotiation process," Chernomyrdin was quoted as saying by Russia's human rights commissioner, Sergei Kovalev.

Chechen forces appeared to be coming under increasing pressure, with the area under their control in the center of Grozny shrinking. Many fighters were somber and clearly tired after several days and nights of constant fighting and shelling.

The Chechens have little heavy weaponry and were armed mostly with assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades. Some men in bands moving up to the fighting had no guns.

Russian troops were pushing into Chechen positions from several directions on a chilly, overcast day, and the independent news agency Interfax said they controlled two-thirds of the capital.

Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev, whose whereabouts have been unclear for days, appeared on Chechen television last night to comment on the war. The mustachioed Dudayev, wearing his military fatigues, looked calm but technical problems prevented all sound. It was unclear when or where the footage was shot.

Bonner asks Jewish groups to condemn Russian 'outrages' in Chechnya

BATSHEVA TSUR

ELENA Bonner, widow of Andrei Sakharov, called on Jewish organizations throughout the world to support the movement condemning violations by the Russians of human rights in Chechnya.

She also called on the mothers of Russian soldiers who are being posted to Chechnya to demonstrate in the streets of Moscow.

"People who want to be independent must be allowed to be independent," Bonner said yesterday. "Chechnya should move painlessly to a confederative or federative arrangement."

Speaking in Jerusalem at the conference commemorating the legacy of Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, Bonner charged that "Russia has violated all the principles of the UN charter. There have been massive violations of human rights in Chechnya."

Earlier Bonner told reporters that there would be far-reaching negative implications in every field following the Russian intervention in the Caucasus.

"There are already signs that the process of democratization in Russia is slowing down rapidly," she said, noting that strict censorship had been reimposed and that journalists - including the director of Russia's second tv channel - had lost their jobs. She said news of what was happening was not reaching the public.

Bonner added that the economic reforms in Russia had also virtually halted. "President Boris Yeltsin is no longer in control," she said, saying that he was being dictated to by industrial and security elements.

Bosnian Moslems ruffled by 'weaker' peace plan

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - Bosnia's Moslem-led government objected to suggestions that an international peace plan could be revised and UN efforts to consolidate a truce hit new snags over a demilitarized zone around Sarajevo.

The US assistant secretary of state for east European affairs, Richard Holbrooke, told Bosnian government leaders that a peace settlement outlined by the five-nation "contact group" last summer was a basis for new negotiations.

His comments drew criticism from Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic, who recalled during a joint news conference with Holbrooke that the plan was originally a NATO-backed unconditional deal requiring Bosnian Serbs to cede land.

"For Bosnia-Herzegovina the plan was 'take it or leave it,'" Silajdzic said. "Now it seems that

the [contact group] position has shifted a little bit since the aggressors [Serbs] rejected it."

Holbrooke later said the contact group remained committed to the original division of territory, allotting 51 percent to the federation of Bosnian government and Croat factions, and 49 percent to Serbs.

The contact group, comprising the US, Russia, Britain, France and Germany, has begun to inject fresh impetus into the peace process and a negotiated four-month truce appeared to be holding.

A UN spokesman said it was quiet across Bosnia yesterday, including the beleaguered Bihac pocket in the northwest.

But the cease-fire, which came into effect on January 1, has become bogged down in a dispute over the demilitarized zone around Sarajevo and conditions raised by Bosnian Serbs over the size of the DMZ.

US river areas evacuated as waters rise to flood level

FORESTVILLE, California (AP) - Rivers surged past flood stages yesterday in northern California, forcing several hundred people from their homes, as storms rolling in from the Pacific deluged the region.

Rainfall eased yesterday, canceling widespread flood warnings, but more storms were on the way later this week, the National Weather Service said.

"For Wednesday through Friday... there will be periods of rain, heavy at times, mild and windy. That means rain every day," said meteorologist John Burkhardt.

Marin County, across the bay from San Francisco, had received 4.2 inches in 24 hours as of yesterday morning. The rain was even heavier far up north: 5.75 inches at Mount Shasta, and

more than 7 inches of rain was reported along the northern California coast.

The Feather River also was near flood stage, and the Napa River topped its 25-foot (7.5-meter) flood stage with a 26.4-foot measurement yesterday morning.

Authorities in Sonoma and Napa counties - the heart of California's wine country - declared states of emergency.

The storms also have saturated southern California, with flooding causing more than \$20 million in damages last week, and more heavy rain was forecast late last night and today.

Day-long drizzle Sunday brought an additional half-inch of rain to the Los Angeles area. Jockeys refused to ride after Sunday's first race at Santa Anita because of the weather.

Court grills Syrian accused in hijack of 'Achille Lauro'

MADRID (AP) - Syrian arms dealer Monzer Kassab testified before a high court judge yesterday on charges of supplying weapons for the 1985 hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro.

Kassab is accused of supplying the Kalashnikov assault rifles used by Palestinian terrorists in the hijacking in which one US passenger was killed, said a court source.

The prosecutor has asked the judge to convict Kassab and sentence him to 29 years in prison, the court source said.

Kassab, who says he engages only in legal arms sales, has consistently maintained he is the victim of a conspiracy to link him to the hijacking.

Poland rejects accusations it bungled Auschwitz anniversary

WARSAW (AP) - President Lech Walesa's spokesman rejected accusations that Poland has bungled plans to mark the 50th anniversary of the Soviet troops' liberation of the Nazis death camp at Auschwitz.

"There is no fault on our part," said Andrzej Zakrzewski yesterday, referring to complaints by an Auschwitz survivors' group that few prominent people who were invited to the January 26-27 ceremonies plan to come.

Baron Maurice Goldstein, who represents about 10,000 survivors as head of the International Auschwitz Committee, accused Walesa's office Friday of "improvisation" and "chaos" in organizing the event.

Heads of state from the 23 countries were invited to com-

memorations at the former camp and in nearby Krakow, but only 12 have said they will attend.

US President Bill Clinton is among those who have declined invitations.

At least seven Nobel Peace Prize winners, including Mother Theresa, Henry Kissinger, Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama, also declined.

Zakrzewski said the Nobel laureates' decisions not to come was more a reflection of their attitudes than of the efforts of Walesa's office to organize the events.

Goldstein alleged that Walesa ignored his request to endorse the committee's invitations to Nobel Peace Prize winners. But Zakrzewski said Walesa never got the request.

The Founding Convention of The Third Way Council

will take place today, Tuesday, January 10, 1995, at 4 p.m. at Beit Sokolow, 4 Kaplan St., Tel Aviv

On the Agenda:

- * Action Program and Organization - Uzi Keren, General Manager of The Third Way
- * The Proposal for the Golan Heights Bill - MK Avigdor Kahalani
- * Implementing the Oslo - Cairo Agreements - Yehuda Harel
- * Election of a Chairman of the Movement

Basic Principles of The Third Way:

- * Support for the peace process coupled with a willingness to compromise.
- * Insistence on peace terms that will safeguard Israel's strategically- and ideologically-based control over the Jordan Valley, the northern Dead Sea area, the Golan Heights, Jerusalem and its environs, and blocs of settlement vital to the state's security which are not heavily populated by Arabs.
- * Opposition to rule over another people.
- * Support for reinforcement and "thickening" of existing settlements along Israel's eastern border, in the Jordan Valley, northern Dead Sea and Arava areas, and on the Golan Heights.

Members of the Council:

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Shoshana Arbeli-Almozlino, former Minister of Health, Givatayim
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Cmndr. (Res.) Zvi Bar, Mayor of Ramat Gan
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Dirty business

FRANCE has always been renowned for its maverick foreign policies, its defiant swimming against the stream, its infuriating ability to rile friends and allies. But its decision this week to break ranks with world opinion and restore relations with Iraq marks a new level of arrogance and self-interest.

The French have a reputation for preferring intellect and self-interest over morality. In this case, plain stupidity would appear to be the appropriate epithet. The feeble excuse for the French decision - that Iraq has done enough in complying with UN sanctions to justify a reward - was immediately shown to be nonsense by the arrogant demeanor of Saddam Hussein. In a week which has already heard him urge Arab states to "launch the 40th missile" against Israel, he strutted in field-marshal's uniform to lambast the West and proclaim that the United Nations had utterly failed to subdue Iraq in the Gulf War.

Saddam's speeches were backed up by a military parade of several thousand "Saddam Commandos" led by Saddam's eldest son, Uday. The unit was formed last October to carry out suicide attacks on US troops. Still living the lie of the "mother of all battles" as a victory, this ludicrous dictator continues to demonstrate that he has learned no lessons, and never will. At the first opportunity he will return to the dangerous aggression that led first to his invasion of Iran and then Kuwait.

Given the style of this man, any nation but France would be ashamed to have the dictator of Baghdad heap praise upon it. Even the Arab states, with their natural instincts for papery over disputes in the name of Islamic and Arab solidarity, have balked at responding to Saddam's overtures. Iraq yesterday attributed criticism of the French move as "barbarism and hatred" - subjects on which we can certainly concede Saddam's expertise.

The Iraqi statement unwittingly put its finger on French motivation by stating: "France has interests in the region which require that its relations with Iraq, which have been harmed by its support for the Western stand, are rejuvenated." What it boils down to is that France, once a major trade partner and arms supplier for Iraq, is positioning itself to steal a march on its allies, especially Britain, by grabbing enormous contracts in Iraq once the UN sanctions are eased.

France has now slipped into a more supportive role for Iraq than even Russia and China. The latter two can at least be understood in the context of long-standing treaties dating from Cold War friendship. Like a guilty child who admits a small offense to hide a greater one, Foreign Minister Alain Juppe rushed a letter to Kuwait assuring the emirate of "France's continued respect for UN sanctions on Iraq." The fact that greedy French industrialists are now poised to help restore Saddam's insane belief in his immortality and power will speak louder in Kuwait than Juppe's hollow missive - only a month after Iraq triggered a new international crisis by moving troops up to the Kuwaiti border.

Nor has the French move shown a shred of respect for Israel's warnings that Saddam is by no means finished. That he can be calling for more missile strikes on Tel Aviv in the midst of the so-called peace process should have given France pause for thought. It should not require the brainpower of a French philosopher to work out that France, with a hushed-up history of collaboration with its Nazi conquerors, has a special interest in not endangering Jewish lives by pouring new expertise, money, and support into the hands of world public enemy No. 1.

Washington's blunt and swift criticism of its so-called ally is welcome. The State Department spokeswoman stated clearly that this is "no time" to be making gestures toward Saddam, and cited the report of the UN's Rolf Ekeus, who is in charge of dismantling Iraq's programs for building weapons of mass destruction. Ekeus said last month Iraq is consistently failing to cooperate with the UN commission. It can be guaranteed Iraq in fact is trying to go the other way and reconstruct, rather than destroy, its dangerous capabilities. It is also clear that in Saddam's eyes Israel would be a convenient little test laboratory for his manic ideas.

It was a French nuclear reactor project the IDF was obliged to destroy. And it was one of the most far-sighted military decisions ever made - and in the face of howls of protest from the same international community that had to fight Saddam 10 years later. Despite the cut-throat nature of modern export business, there is still such a thing as dirty business. In clearing the diplomatic road for French enterprises to slither back into Iraq and assist this pariah, the French government is back in dirty business.



The newest Frankenstein creation

Heart of the matter

JONATHAN BLASS

A fundamental change in how the Jewish settlers of Judea, Samaria and Gaza are perceived has occurred in the past week.

It has emerged, almost unnoticed, from the controversy over the building of Efrat's new neighborhood and the subsequent government decision to establish a ministerial committee to limit the growth of existing Jewish settlements.

That decision reflects the awakening of the Arab terror organizations and their interlocutors in the Israeli government to the realization that if direct steps are not taken to curtail them, the settlements will not vanish on their own, as previously planned.

At the time of the signing of the Oslo agreement, the settlements, deprived of government funding and subject to constant Arab harassment and terror, were expected to wither and die. The press was full of stories of settlers who were supposedly anxious to escape back over the Green Line if they were suitably reimbursed.

All that has changed. Over the last few weeks, it has been reported that the Jewish population of Judea, Samaria and Gaza has grown by 5 to 10 percent since Rabin's infamous handshake with Arafat; that the city of Ariel in Samaria is experiencing an unprecedented demand for new apartments; and, finally, that the town of Efrat has been expanding to include an additional 400 families.

Undaunted by terror, Jews from pre-1967 Israel are continuing to move not from the settlements, but to them.

The Israeli architects of the Oslo agreement underestimated the mettle of Jewish settlers and the depth and authenticity of their Zionist idealism. They themselves engulfed in an atmosphere

of commercialism, they could not imagine that other Israelis would be willing to make sacrifices in life and limb and undergo the psychological suffering involved in clinging to their homes, while just outside Arab terror flourished, unhampered by any serious IDF effort to eliminate it.

The government has totally misjudged public commitment to Jewish settlement

BUT EVEN more significantly, the government totally misjudged the commitment of the Israeli public to Jewish settlement.

The settlement of Judea, Samaria and Gaza was, from its most early beginnings, contingent on widespread popular support. Almost miraculously, that support has survived the ridiculous yet persistent assertions that all of Israel's financial difficulties were results of Likud spending on settlements. It has outlasted the 1992 elections and the debacle of Oslo.

A Ma'ariv-sponsored poll of January 6 has Binyamin Netanyahu leading Yitzhak Rabin by 25 to 23 percent. But the same poll says the Israeli public supports continued building in the settlements by a majority of 54 to 39 percent. In other words, more Israelis support settlements than those who favor Netanyahu and Rabin combined.

THIS IS not a one-time phenomenon. Past polls have shown that when the government was consid-

ering evicting the Jewish settlers of Hebron and Netzarim, the majority of the public stood firmly behind the settlements.

But why? The answer goes to the heart of Israeli society today.

The unconcealed apathy of the Rabin government toward Jewish victims of Arab terror, whether near Neveh Tzuf or in Afula, is simply non-Jewish. Jews identify with other Jews when they are hurt. They don't find excuses for their murderers. Government callousness is strikingly out of sync with the best and deepest instincts of Israeli life.

It is those instincts, Jewish and traditional, that generate the continued backing of the Israeli public for Jewish settlement in Judea, Samaria and Gush Katif. Beneath the superficiality of permissiveness and materialism, Israeli society is still fundamentally rooted in Jewish faith and Jewish values.

Even those Israelis who are happy to leave Gaza because of the security burden involved in remaining, do not, on the whole, accept the legitimacy of the Arab claim to sovereignty there, or anywhere else in the Land of Israel.

Israel's government, motivated in its pact with the terrorists less by the desire to end bloodshed (which today it claims it always knew was an unrealistic goal) than by an existential need to dissociate from Jewish tradition and its concomitant allegiance to the Land of Israel, finds itself out of touch with Israeli reality.

The fact is that Jewish settlement remains popular and is a serious obstacle to Yasser Arafat's "peace."

The writer, rabbi of Neveh Tzuf in Samaria, heads Ratzon Yehuda, a rabbinical training program for graduates of Yeshivot Hesder.

Labor's loss of popularity

SUSAN HATTIS ROLEF

EVERYONE agrees that Time magazine's recent "opinion poll" needs to be taken with a grain of salt. Not even the Likud's most favorable polls show anything like 47 mandates for the Likud and 27 for Labor. Mina Tzemah's polls, giving the Likud 42 mandates and Labor 36, sound more realistic.

But one thing is clear. The Labor Party - and particularly Prime Minister Rabin - has lost a lot of popularity, and only part of the decline can be attributed to mid-term crisis.

Labor has several problems. The first is the premier's excessive concern with short-term public opinion.

Few governments in Israel have embarked on so many new and revolutionary policies as this one. But instead of marching steadily ahead toward full implementation of these policies, Rabin seems too frequently to waver every time someone whispers that the public doesn't like this or that measure.

Even though most of the time he finally opts for going on with the policy he originally adopted, that wavering doesn't look too good.

Labor's second problem is the way Rabin manages his government - or rather, doesn't manage it. He simply scolds its members or pours scorn on this or that minister, either verbally or through body language.

The director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, Shimon

Sheves, has the sensitivities of a bull in a china shop, and there's no one in the Office with the tact to balance the Rabin-Sheves duo - and that doesn't help, either.

At least in this respect, one can look back nostalgically to the brief period in 1984-86 when Shimon Peres was prime minister.

The party's problems are obscuring the government's very real achievements

and managed to keep a much more complex and heterogeneous team working together in harmony.

THE THIRD problem concerns the way the party itself is run. With Peres as party chairman and Micha Harish as secretary-general, the party functioned relatively smoothly. One suspects that the Peres-Harish team would also have had the wisdom to avoid the disgrace of the May 1994 Histradut elections and kept Haim Ramon within the party fold.

The combination of Rabin as party chairman and Nissim Zivili as secretary-general is catastrophic. Zivili, with all his charm

and good intentions, lacks the administrative talent necessary to run the party effectively during a period of severe budgetary cuts. And Rabin simply isn't interested.

The fourth problem concerns the primaries system. There is a state of panic, especially among Labor MKs who, in the last primaries, were elected on a district basis and this time may have to contend in the national list.

At this early stage, it seems pretty obvious that the chances of MKs like Eli Dayan, Rafi Edri and Shlomo Bibbut getting re-elected are extremely low.

However, there is nothing to stop them using every trick, no matter how cheap or harmful to their party, to try to attract public attention.

This doesn't mean that the issues they raise - like a long school day in development towns and poor neighborhoods - aren't important. But the right way for a Labor MK to try to change his government's priorities doesn't lie in headline-grabbing sensationalism. This sort of activity helps no one but the opposition; it certainly doesn't help children in development towns and poor neighborhoods.

Labor must put its house in order so that, come the next elections, it will be able to reap the fruits of the current government's very real and significant achievements.

The writer is a political scientist.

Black comedy

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

SOMETHING is rotten on the stage of Habimah. Our national theater is no longer a major player on the local theatrical scene, and for good reason.

For many years, Habimah has produced one major flop after another. Its deficit has made major headlines, and even been discussed in government sessions. And subscribers - who couldn't care less about the word "national" attached to the company's name - have been refusing to renew their subscriptions.

Everyone was sure Habimah would be saved once Shmuel Omer, who had been running things for 20 years, left.

But the appointment of David Alexander as general manager and Gary Bilu as artistic director set in motion a comedy of errors that reached its absurd climax on January 1, when Habimah's board forced both men to resign.

While Bilu agreed to go, a stunned Alexander, who had requested that the board sack Bilu, refused.

Only those who are naive or don't know much about Habimah, Alexander or Bilu could have believed that the two men stood any chance of working peacefully together.

In fact, there was a perpetual tug of war behind the scenes all last year, with each man trying to shift the tide of opinion - inside and outside Habimah - in his favor, and against his rival. Bilu came to Habimah with an impressive record as director of the Beersheba Theater and the Beit Zvi Drama School in Ramat Gan. He came, in with a clear conviction: that our national theater must produce only first-rate plays. Unwilling to make any concessions to mediocrity - for example, he implied that the overall standard of Israeli plays was low - he managed to anger local theater people, but that didn't sway him. It eventually cost him his job.

Alexander, who holds a Ph.D. in theater but had never worked in a theater before and had previously run the Tel Aviv Foundation, tried to keep within his budget, and shied away from any clear artistic mandate.

It was clear that the Bilu-Alexander partnership, in which neither man was willing to work as part of a team, was doomed to fail. WHICH BRINGS us to a major question that affects the future of theater in this country, particularly Habimah: Who, above all others, can make or break a theater?

Great theaters all over the world are primarily known for their outstanding artistic directors. It is these people who give a company its identity. General managers cannot do that alone.

Granted, some artistic directors here and abroad double as general managers. But ideally, the person who molds a company, providing it with a vision, shouldn't have to be a bookkeeper as well.

It's taken a few decades, but Israeli theater has lost its identity. Our companies are all beginning to look much the same, as artistic directors shuffle the various jobs among themselves. Now Habimah's board has approached Ya'acov Agmon and asked him to become the theater's next manager. They want him to nominate his own artistic director.

Agmon is a charismatic individual. But will any artistic director who has to work with him be given enough space to make his or her own theatrical personality felt?

The best - indeed, the only - way to end the black comedy Habimah has become is to switch on the lights in the boardrooms and make everyone aware that, while the financial side is important, our national theater is in urgent need of the clear identity that only a brilliant artistic director with vision can provide.

The author writes regularly for the arts pages of The Jerusalem Post.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HALACHIC JUDAISM AND MODERN SCIENCE

Sir, - Under the presumptuous headline, "Rabbinate versus Creation," Shulamit Hareven, in a well-written article (December 20) challenging the halachic authorities to live up to reality and to accept her assertions, is overreaching herself for the following reasons:

1) If indeed she looks for an understanding with the leaders of the halachic Judaism, she is going about it the wrong way by trying to discredit them.

2) There is still an enormous controversy raging among all sectors of clinicians about the growing incidence of homosexuality.

3) Today psychiatrists tend to stress the need and desirability for those troubled by homosexuality to

try to establish long-term heterosexual relationships, even if there are different levels of adaptation.

4) The proponents of legalizing homosexuality are doing a good job of driving observant Jews - a large segment of our community - away from peaceful coexistence with aggressive seculars.

5) Halachic Judaism considers homosexuality against creation since "God created man in His image, male and female... and He blessed them and said unto them: Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the world."

Despite the vogue of excessive egalitarianism and the spread of unlimited permissiveness, it still is a moot question whether homosexual-

ity is indeed endogenous or merely the outcome of undesirable cultural or environmental causes forming a pathogenic set-up.

May I assure Ms. Hareven that noted halachic scholars have made great strides to get involved with most modern problems, such as male infertility, organ transplants and in-vitro fertilization, in a very understanding and accommodating manner whilst based on the immutable principles of the Torah. They strive towards this end, provided it does not contradict the very basis of human continuity as is the case with homosexuality.

DR. H.E. BLUMENTHAL
Jerusalem.

JORDAN RIVER BRIDGE

Sir, - I don't see why the King Hussein Bridge between Israel and Jordan is called the Allenby Bridge in Israel. The name King Hussein Bridge has been in use for decades ever since the West Bank was united with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, whereas the name Allenby Bridge was only reintroduced by Israel after 1967.

Now that a very promising peace treaty has been signed between Jordan and Israel, I don't see any logic in maintaining the two names.

IBRAHIM ISSA BALASMEH
(A Jordanian tourist in Israel)
Amman.

The Jerusalem Post invites readers to send letters to the Editor, who will be pleased to consider them for publication. Letters which do not carry the writer's full name and address cannot be considered. A fax number alone is insufficient. A writer's identity will be withheld from publication if, in the Editor's view, this is warranted by special circumstances.

Please be brief. The Editor retains the right to shorten letters. Only a selection can be published and none individually acknowledged. Letters not accepted for publication will be returned only upon request and inclusion of a self-addressed stamped envelope.

REDUCING DEATH ON THE ROADS

Sir, - In her letter of December 20 ("Carnage on the roads"), Zelda Harris explains that Metusa, for which she speaks, is dedicated to reducing death on the roads caused by irresponsible drivers.

Obviously, the simplest way to bring about Metusa's objective is to immediately take away, for an indefinite period, the license of any driver who has demonstrably shown irresponsible driving behavior. The objection to this, it is stated, is that it would mean that many drivers would lose their means of livelihood. Better to lose their present means of livelihood than lose their lives, cause the death of others and bring endless grief to the families that are left behind.

Anyone resisting the imposition of such harsh licensing measures to save lives is directly responsible and accountable for the continued loss of lives on the road, as are those who resist reducing the present excessive speed limit.

GUS STONE

Netanya.

PAINFUL HONESTY

Sir, - I want to thank Elyakim Ha'etzi for his honesty in his column of December 12 ("No pills will cure these ills"). Unlike Binyamin Netanyahu and others on the "mainstream" right who pretend to believe that we can have peace without continuing the occupation, Ha'etzi does not shrink from saying that "peace is impossible, at least in this generation." Israel's national goals, as he and others like him define them, are indeed "not reconcilable with those of the Arabs, whether rich or poor, moderate or extremist."

Would that other right-wing leaders were as honest as Ha'etzi. Then we would be able to see clearly that the real choice before us is not between the current peace process and some "other peace," but between peace with painful compromise and perpetual conflict.

MARTIN J. GORVINE

Tel Aviv.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Sir, - It is a sorry commentary about a society in general and Tel Hashomer army base in particular that it promulgates mistreatment of animals (organizing dog fights as reported by List Collins on December 6). Thankfully the recently passed Anti-Cruelty to Animals Law can intervene to protect vulnerable creatures who have few guardians and to whom we should be grateful for their help, in particular dogs.

What kind of message does condoning animal cruelty give our young people, in this case, all the soldiers who watched or took part? What kind of model of power does this behavior represent? Kol hakavod to Yairiv Rozenwasser, the soldier who had the courage to complain about the animal abuse, and to Minister Yossi Sarid who tries to raise the social consciousness for animal welfare that has been practiced throughout Jewish history.

FRANCES FREY

Tel Aviv.

150

BUSINESS & FINANCE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 1995

State appeals former
Isramco head's acquittal

THE State Attorney's Office has appealed former Isramco general manager Alex Helfman's acquittal on insider trading charges to the Tel Aviv District Court.

Helfman was acquitted in November by the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court of using inside information on the state of drilling for oil at the Yam 2 rig near Ashdod to buy stock in companies involved in the efforts, and of passing the information to the company that ran his investment portfolio.

The appeal states that Helfman

Jerusalem Post Staff and Tim

had information that could significantly alter the stock price of companies involved in the drilling.

Possession of such information by someone on the inside like Helfman does not give him the right to use it before the rest of the public, the appeal said.

The appeal also claimed that the court based its rulings on wide-ranging legal opinions not backed up by detailed facts and evidence.

The State Attorney's Office wants the acquittal canceled and Helfman convicted and properly sentenced for his crime.

Helfman said he is shocked the prosecution is appealing the case. "The original charges should not have been made at all, especially after the personal and professional damage I have suffered as a result over the past three years," he said.

As a result of the charges, Helfman was forced to resign from various posts at Isramco and Joel.

'Incompetence has exposed
state to NIS 100m. in lawsuits'

EVELYN GORDON

and the Fuel Authority.

In this ruling, the arbitrator also said the companies did have the right to get their investment back via the depreciation allowance. The State Attorney's Office and the Energy Ministry said the arbitrator had no authority to rule on this issue.

However, they never appealed the ruling in court, so it acquired legal force, and the station owners filed suit based on it.

Attorney Ze'ev Afik, the Energy Ministry's legal adviser, told

the committee that if the state had appealed the arbitration ruling, the station owners would have had no basis for their suit.

Head of the Justice Ministry's civil division, Miriam Rubinstein, insisted that even without having appealed the arbitrator's ruling, the state has a strong defense against the suits.

Former energy minister Moshe Shahal said the sums demanded by the station owners were already handed over to the gas companies via the government-

set price structure for gasoline.

The owners should therefore be suing the fuel companies, he said, because the ministry has no intention of paying twice.

Magen was unconvinced by these responses, however, and accused the State Attorney's Office of "negligence and incompetence."

Magen said he has received complaints about the office on other issues as well, and the committee would therefore hold a discussion with Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair on the office's performance.

Fed props up
peso as
Mexicans
seek support

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The Federal Reserve intervened in the foreign exchange market yesterday to prop up the battered Mexican peso as Mexican officials sought support abroad to help the country weather its financial crisis.

The flotation of the peso on December 20, which resulted in its losing about a third of its value, led investors to bail out of Mexican investments, sending the Mexican stock market skidding.

A spokesman for the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, which generally acts for the Fed in market interventions, said it bought Mexican pesos for dollars at the request of the Mexican central bank.

The Fed said it "announced today it is intervening in the foreign exchange market at the request of and for the account of the Banco de Mexico, purchasing pesos against the dollar."

"These operations are consistent with the efforts of the US monetary authorities to assist Mexico in responding to recent financial developments."

The peso regained some of its massive losses of the last three weeks, rising as much as 65 centavos to 5.0 to the dollar before easing to 5.30. But Mexican stocks slumped more than 74 points, or 3.28 percent, showing no sign of a turnaround.

Mexican Foreign Minister Jose Angel Gurría, putting a brave face on his country's peso crisis to placate nervous Japanese investors, forecast an end to the upheaval in a few weeks.

In meetings with government officials, bankers and business executives in Tokyo, Gurría reiterated Mexico's position that its economy is fundamentally strong and said the crisis is an opportunity, not a setback.

Gurría received a polite hearing. But like much of the financial world, his listeners were not ready to buy his argument completely that a drastic shift in the currency's value was something to cheer about.

Kessar: Work on
Tel Aviv railway
will begin this year

HAIM SHAPIRO

TRANSPORT Minister Yisrael Kessar promised yesterday that work on the planned Tel Aviv Suburban Railway would begin this year.

Kessar made the announcement in a meeting with Ports and Railways Authority Director-General Shoshet Lerer and other officials of the authority.

According to calculations presented to Kessar by the authority, the suburban railway would be profitable on all its lines. Kessar said this should silence critics who have objected to the railway on economic grounds.

Lerer said it would not be a

problem to begin work on railway lines anywhere in the country, but there was a statutory problem regarding lands belonging to local authorities.

Kessar promised to solve each of these problems in talks with the Israel Lands Administration, the Finance Ministry and each of the local authorities through which the railway will pass.

Kessar added he would not allow bureaucratic obstacles to hold up the development of the railway, which was practically the only solution to the problem of traffic congestion.

"Without the railway, Tel Aviv



Kessar: 'Without the railway, Tel Aviv will turn into one big traffic jam.'

will turn into one big traffic jam," he said.

The railway is estimated to be completed in three to four years.

Saguy: Don't
raise rates
at Avner

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE deficit of Avner, the government insurance body which pays claims to accident victims, should not be covered by raising the premium on mandatory auto insurance, MK Gideon Saguy, chairman of the Knesset insurance subcommittee, said yesterday.

Avner's NIS 1 billion actuarial deficit is "very worrying," Saguy said, and he plans to call a committee next week to discuss the company's structure.

Saguy received information on Avner's intentions to raise premiums on mandatory auto insurance, his spokesman said.

Saguy said he fears the insurance companies working with Avner are trying to take advantage of it to reduce their losses in the auto insurance sector.

"Avner's current structure acts as a guarantee for insurance companies," said Saguy in a press release. "If they have losses in the auto sector, the companies expect the public to finance the losses by increasing Avner's premiums."

More than 65 percent of Avner's business is controlled by the three largest insurance groups - Clal Phoenix Israel and Migdal.

Avner chairman Haim Stoessel said he does not understand Saguy's objections, and the company has no plans to raise premiums.

Stoessel said he cannot discuss the company's accumulated deficit, since it is related to its ongoing court case with Eliyahu Insurance company.

At the end of 1994, Avner sued Eliyahu for breach of contract after the company withdrew its contract with Avner and signed an agreement with re-insurance agents from abroad.

Comptroller
rejects
complaint
against IEC

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE State Comptroller's Office has rejected complaints made against the Israel Electric Corporation for awarding the contract to supply boilers at its new coal power station in Ashkelon to the Babcock & Wilcox firm.

The Israeli representative of Steinmuelle, a German boiler company, filed the complaint, claiming IEC's management unfairly awarded Babcock, a US firm, the contract in June 1993.

After examining the complaint, the comptroller concluded that "the IEC had no reason to prefer Steinmuelle's proposal, which was 91 percent more expensive than Babcock and Wilcox's proposal, true for start of 1994 prices."

"Based on these findings, we did not find IEC's professional considerations unreasonable," the comptroller said. "For this reason, the overseer of public complaints sees no reason to interfere in IEC's professional decisions."

Treasury to issue tender for providing
government with cellular phone service

JOSE ROSENFELD

THE Treasury will issue a tender to choose between Cellcom and Motorola to provide the government with cellular phone services, Accountant-General Reuven Kokolevitch announced yesterday.

Kokolevitch appointed his deputy, Harry Langman, to prepare the tender that will set the terms of the competition.

The Treasury will also update existing direc-

tives used to set the criteria and the rules for operating and using cellular phones in the civil service.

In addition, it will expand the authority of the various ministries regarding cellular phone use.

The tender will take into account Cellcom's organization based both on the schedule and rate of national deployment of its services.

Patt demands government freeze
legal proceedings against moshavim

EVELYN GORDON

IF the government does not deal with the problem of moshavim who set up businesses on lands zoned as agricultural, the Economics Committee will pass a law freezing the legal proceedings against them, committee chairman Gideon Patt (Likud) threatened yesterday.

Patt said there are some 2,000 businesses which were set up by moshavim in an effort to save their economies, despite the fact that their land was zoned for agriculture.

An interministerial committee

was set up to deal with the issue, but while it was still searching for a solution, the state's legal apparatus went ahead and filed suit against the moshavim, "as if it weren't part of the state of Israel," he charged.

Patt said he would first ask Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in his role as interior minister, to freeze the legal proceedings, because in principle, he opposes having the committee pass

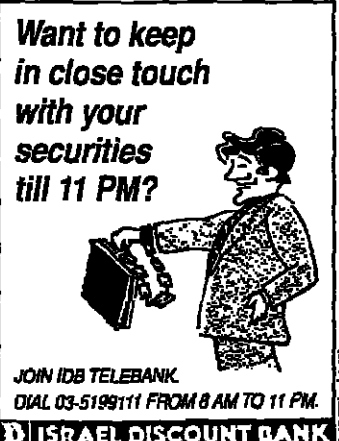
"broad legislation with many precedent-setting implications."

If Rabin refuses to take action, however, the committee will have no choice but to pass a bill by Shmuel Avital (Labor), which would freeze all the legal proceedings until July 1998, he said.

"My bill is meant to give the right to employment to those who can't make a living from agricultural work, as the moshavim were meant to do," said Avital. A representative of the moshavim added that having invested some \$1.5 billion in the moshavim, it would be foolish for the government to then force them into economic collapse by forbidding alternatives to agriculture.

However, representatives of the Health and Environment ministries told the committee the story is not so simple. Many complaints about noise and pollution stemming from the illegal industries have been received from moshav residents, they said.

Dror Crispin of the Israel Lands Administration told the committee that the ILA was planning to find a solution for the moshavim, at its own expense.



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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Tadiran workers threaten work sanctions: Tadiran workers yesterday threatened to initiate work sanctions next week after management refused to involve them in plans to restructure the company. Motti Gal, head of Tadiran's workers committee, said he fears workers will lose their rights if the firm is separated into a number of subsidiaries, controlled by a holding company.

Tichon demands probe into tender for new airport terminal: State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat should investigate a possible conflict of interests regarding the tender for the new terminal at Ben-Gurion Airport, MK Dan Tichon (Likud) said yesterday.

Tichon said one of the six finalists in the tender for the \$35 million project was the American company TRA, which has already won the contract to prepare guidelines for the project. If TRA also wins the current tender, he said, it would essentially be responsible for supervising itself, which would create a conflict of interests.

Initial discussions on FTA deal started with Hungary: Israel and Hungary began initial discussions exploring the possibility of concluding a free trade area agreement, the Industry and Trade Ministry reported yesterday.

After both sides reviewed the trade pacts reached with third countries, they decided to adopt, as a framework, the agreements they have with the European Union and with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). They also agreed to modify the framework to accommodate each other's trade needs. An ad-hoc committee was appointed to work out the required changes.

Gov't agrees to reach asymmetrical MFN pact with Jordan: The government has agreed to arrive at an asymmetrical Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade agreement with Jordan, taking into account the different levels of economic development between the countries, the Industry and Trade Ministry reported yesterday. The Jordanians, on their part, agreed that even under the asymmetrical arrangement, Israeli exports will get preferential treatment in the Jordanian market.

The sides are planning to negotiate an annex to the trade pact that will include a list of mutual tariff reductions which will take into account each country's sensitivity to particular imports which could affect local industries. The trade talks will continue here on January 25.

Shemen Industries' appeal to apply duties on edible oil rejected: The Industry and Trade Ministry yesterday rejected Shemen Industries' appeal to apply duties on European Union edible oil exports to neutralize government subsidies to oil producers. The ministry found that EU countries have stopped subsidizing producers since 1992, and most of the oil seeds used in production are imported to Europe.

Transferred Communications Ministry workers to get pension: Finance Minister Avraham Shohat and Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni yesterday decided that 800 Communications Ministry workers who were transferred to the Postal Authority in March 1988 will receive their pension from the Pension Administration.

The decision applies to men who were 50 years old and women who were 45 years old at the time of the transfer. The remaining 2,200 Post Authority workers will be provided pension insurance by the authority by means of regular pension funds.

Migdal signs deal with IFTRIC to provide reinsurance services: Migdal has signed an agreement to offer reinsurance services to the Israel Foreign Risks Insurance Company. According to the deal, Migdal will incur 12.5 percent of IFTRIC's risk in covering short-term export transactions, of up to one year.

ISRAEL'S NEW FUTURE
INTERVIEWS

Manfred Gerstenfeld

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Israel's New Future-Interviews, by Manfred Gerstenfeld, consists of a series of 16 interviews with Israeli experts and thinkers on important facets of the country's future. It deals with likely changes, and those considered crucial to the country's development. A panorama of Israel's problems and the keys to solving them are examined. Subjects include: relations with the US, Europe, the Vatican, the Islamic world and Jews abroad; social, economic, cultural and environmental issues; and special communities, such as the ultra-Orthodox and kibbutz movement. Softcover, 229 pp.

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ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

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Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.875	5.125	5.875	
U.S. dollar (\$50,000)	4.875	5.125	5.875	
U.S. dollar (\$10,000)	4.125	4.375	4.875	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	5.125	5.375	5.875	
Yen (10 million yen)	0.750	0.875	1.000	

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (9.1.95)				
Currency basket	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES	
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	3.390	3.390	3.390	3.390
German mark	3.040	3.043	2.95	3.09
Pound sterling	1.924	1.913	1.89	1.98
French franc	4.6703	4.781	4.57	4.79
Japanese yen (100)	0.2583	0.2581	0.24	0.27
Dutch guilder	2.2529	2.2529	2.25	2.25
Swedish krona	0.4000	0.4000	0.39	0.41
Norwegian krone	0.4416	0.4478	0.43	0.45
Denmark leone	0.4803	0.4872	0.48	0.50
Portuguese escudo	0.0020	0.0020	0.01	0.01
Canadian dollar	2.1393	2.1393	2.10	2.10
Australian dollar	2.2395	2.2395	2.24	2.27
S. African rand	0.8440	0.8440	0.74	0.74
Belgian franc (10)	0.3339	0.3451	0.32	0.35
Austrian schilling (10)	2.7394	2.7394	2.69	2.72
Italian lire (1000)	1.8449	1.8708	1.80	1.81
Japanese yen (100)	—	—	4.58	4.64
Egyptian pound	—	—	0.85	0.81
ECU	3.6640	3.7155	3.61	3.69
Irish punt	4.8217	4.8857	4.51	4.79
Spanish peseta (100)	2.2493	2.2810	2.18	2.24

* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel.

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

02-241282

It's High Noon in bid to save NHL season

NEW YORK (AP) — It's now just a matter of hours before National Hockey League owners either come to contract terms with their players or cancel a season that never began.

"Is it possible to reach agreement? I didn't think it was possible, I wouldn't try," said NHL Players Association executive director Bob Goodenow, who began meeting with commissioner Gary Bettman yesterday in a final attempt to beat the owners' deadline of noon today (7 pm Israel time) for canceling the season.

"It's incumbent upon Gary and me to try," Goodenow said. "But I don't think there should be optimism. We're in a very serious, difficult situation."

Yesterday's meeting in New York was the first face-to-face encounter between the dispute's two central figures since December 6.

On Saturday, the league's Board of Governors rejected the NHLPA's "final" offer and presented their own "final" plan. Sunday, in a union conference call, all 26 player reps turned down management's proposal.

About 125 players, including stars like Wayne Gretzky and Mark Messier took part in the

conference call and agreed that the owners' plan didn't allow enough freedom of movement.

"When you get limits on what you can make, where you can go and when you can go — it's just not right," said Jeremy Roenick, Chicago Blackhawks player representative. "It's almost like a form of Communism."

The union's latest offer would grant the players unrestricted free agency at the age of 30 and salary arbitration privileges in most cases after a player's fifth season. Clubs would have the right to walk away from one arbitration decision a year. The proposal also would cap rookie salaries at \$900,000 and would give either side the right to reopen the agreement in September 1998.

The owners' latest offer would grant the players unrestricted free agency at the age of 32 and salary arbitration privileges in most cases after a player's fifth season, but clubs would have the right to walk away from two arbitration decisions annually. The proposal also would cap rookie salaries at \$825,000 and would give only the owners reopener rights after the 1997-98 season.

SAN DIEGO (Reuter) — They saved the best for last.

In the final and only exciting NFL divisional playoff game of the weekend, Stan Humphries threw an eight-yard touchdown pass to Mark Seay with 35 seconds left and the San Diego Chargers barely held on to their first lead of the game to edge the Miami Dolphins 22-21 on Sunday.

The Chargers reached the AFC Championship game for the first time in 13 years and are one win away from their first Super Bowl appearance. They will play the Pittsburgh Steelers, who routed the Cleveland Browns 29-9 on Saturday.

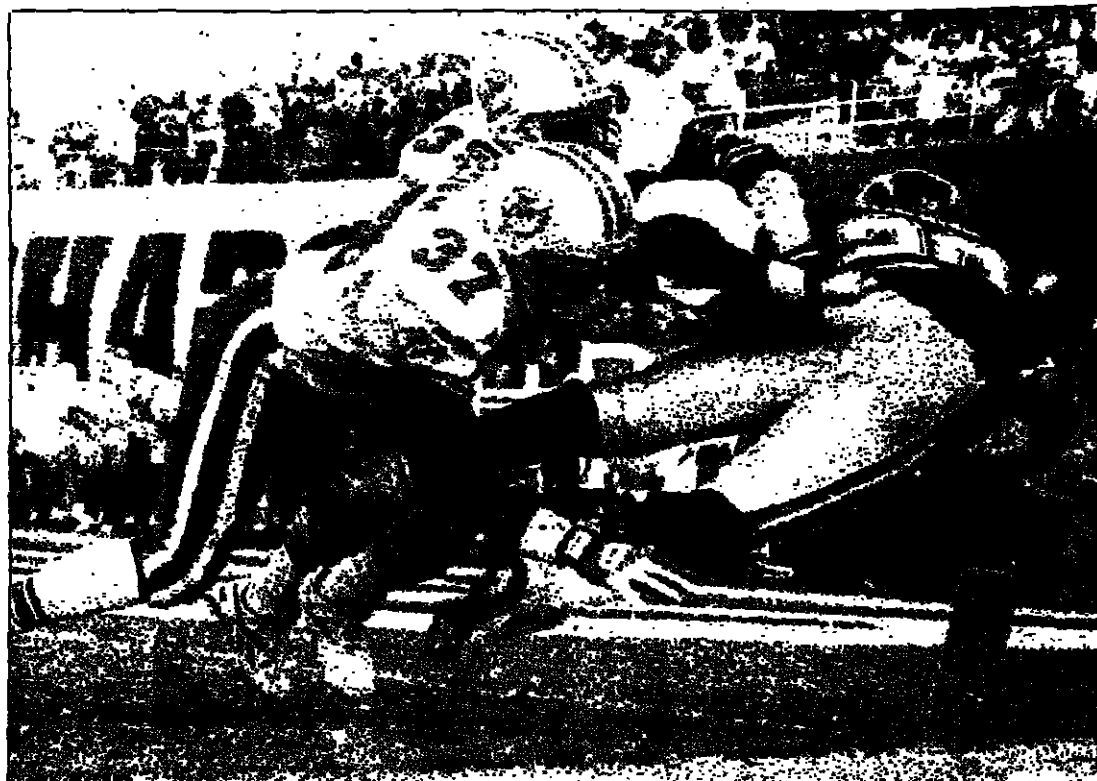
In Sunday's early game, the two-time defending champion Dallas Cowboys romped past the Green Bay Packers 35-9 to set up a third straight showdown against the host 49ers for the NFC's Super Bowl berth. On its way to two straight Super Bowl wins, Dallas has beaten the 49ers in the NFC final.

The San Diego-Miami game had a little bit of everything — brilliant passing, pounding running, stout defense, a safety, controversial calls and a last-second field goal attempt.

Miami's Pete Stoyanovich missed a potential game-winning 47-yard field goal with one second left after the Dolphins had used an interference call to move into San Diego territory.

The Chargers used a powerful ground game and short passes to overcome a 15-point halftime deficit.

Dolphins defeated as Stoyanovich misses from 47 yards; San Diego reaches AFC final for first time in 13 years



JUDGMENT PLAY — Chargers' running back Natrone Means (r) dives into the end zone for a controversial TD as Dolphins' JB Brown (37) and Michael Stewart (35) close in. Replays showed clearly that Means had stepped out of bounds.

Humphries completed 28-of-43 passes for 276 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions. Natrone Means rushed for 139 yards and a score — although replays

indicated he was actually out of bounds just before scoring.

Midway through the fourth quarter, it appeared San Diego had taken the lead on a 37-yard

touchdown pass to Shawn Jefferson. But Jefferson was ruled out of bounds, even though replays showed he had two feet in bounds.

Earlier in the fourth quarter, Dolphins tight end Keith Jackson gave up the ball after a catch. The ball was recovered by the Chargers but officials ruled Jackson had thrown an illegal forward pass and Miami kept possession.

Trailing 21-6 at halftime, the Chargers kept the ball out of Miami quarterback Dan Marino's hands for most of the second half with more than 20 minutes of ball possession.

Marino completed 24-of-38 passes for 262 yards and three scores, all in the first half. Keith Jackson caught eight passes for 109 yards and two touchdowns for the Dolphins, who were out-gained 202-26 on the ground.

Marino extended his record streak of playoff games with a touchdown pass to 12.

San Diego took the second-half kickoff and marched 71 yards in 15 plays to the Dolphins' 1. But Means was knocked out of bounds a half-yard shy of the end zone, giving Miami possession.

On the next play, Bernie Parmelee was tackled in the end zone, giving the Chargers a safety.

NFL DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS (all times Israel)
SATURDAY, JANUARY 7
Pittsburgh 28, Cleveland 9
San Francisco 44, Bears 16
SUNDAY, JANUARY 8
Dallas 35, Green Bay 9
San Diego 22, Miami 21
CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS
SUNDAY, JANUARY 15
San Diego at Pittsburgh 7:30 pm
Dallas at San Francisco 1:00 pm
SUPER BOWL
SUNDAY, JANUARY 22
Miami 1:00 am (Monday morning)

Knicks cruise to 6th straight victory

NEW YORK (AP) — Hubert Davis had six 3-pointers and 22 points and John Starks added 21 as the New York Knicks won their sixth straight game Sunday, beating the woeful Minnesota Timberwolves 102-87.

The Knicks' resurgent defense, which hasn't given up more than 93 points during the winning streak, kept Minnesota below 100 points for their 14th consecutive game, extending a Timberwolves record.

Davis, 10-for-17 in his previous two games, made seven of eight field goal attempts. His 3-pointers helped New York tie a team record with 12 treys. Patrick Ewing led the Knicks with 22 points.

Isiah Rider had 17 points for Minnesota, which lost its ninth straight to the Knicks and fourth straight overall.

Magic 108, Pistons 88
Anfernee Hardaway scored 26 points and Shaquille O'Neal added 23 to lead Orlando to a rout of their short-handed hosts.

The Pistons were playing without Grant Hill, who aggravated a left arch injury in Detroit's last game. Detroit, now missing five of its top eight players, has lost eight straight and 13 of 14. Orlando has won nine of 10.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Orlando	25	6	.813	0
New York	18	12	.600	7
Boston	12	19	.387	13.5
New Jersey	10	22	.310	14.5
Miami	10	21	.323	15.5
Philadelphia	10	21	.323	15.5
Washington	7	23	.233	18
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Cleveland	21	10	.677	0
Indiana	19	11	.633	1.5
Charlotte	18	12	.600	2
Chicago	18	15	.545	5
Atlanta	14	19	.424	9
Milwaukee	10	21	.323	11
Detroit	9	20	.310	11

Hardaway led all scorers, while O'Neal shook off the flu to add 11 rebounds to his scoring total.

Joe Dumars led the Pistons with 19 points, while Bill Curley came off the bench to score a career-high 15.

Nuggets 102, Bucks 96 (OT)
Brian Williams hit three key baskets late in regulation and in overtime, leading the Nuggets to a home win.

Bryant Stith, who blew a chance to win in regulation when he missed two free throws with 0.4 seconds left, atoned by hitting a driving layup and two free throws in overtime.

Glenn Robinson led the Bucks with 21 points. Eric Murdock had 20 points and Vin Baker added 18 points and 11 rebounds for Milwaukee, which couldn't overcome 27 percent shooting (14-of-52) in the second half and overtime.

SUNDAY'S RESULTS:
New York 102, Minnesota 87
Orlando 108, Detroit 88
Denver 102, Milwaukee 96 (OT)
LA Lakers 122, Miami 101

Lakers 122, Heat 105
Vlade Divac broke out of an offensive slump with 21 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists as host Los Angeles notched its fifth straight victory.

The Lakers, one of the NBA's hottest teams even without injured leading scorer Cedric Ceballos, have won 17 of their last 21 games and are 10-1 at the Forum since losing their first two home games.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Utah	21	10	.677	0
Seattle	21	10	.677	0
San Antonio	18	13	.579	2.5
Denver	18	15	.545	3
Dallas	14	19	.424	6.5
Minnesota	9	24	.269	14.5
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Phoenix	24	7	.774	0
Portland	21	10	.677	2.5
LA Lakers	20	9	.690	3
Sacramento	17	13	.567	6.5
Golden State	16	14	.538	7.5
LA Clippers	10	19	.345	13
San Diego	5	26	.161	19

WHEN MK Yosef Ba-Gad's Knesset days are over, he can always find another job — as a manager in the World Wrestling Federation, where his ability to bend the truth would make him a natural.

After all, pro wrestling has specialized in hyperbole for generations, from its infancy as regular fare on poor man's TV to its current cult status among local youngsters, who catch it on Sports Channel or Prime Sport.

Today, WWF honcho Vince McMahon and his well-heeled staff have added laser shows, fireworks and music to attract the "New Generation" of WWF fans. But under the glitz, the grunts and struts are the same: yesterday's Gorgeous George is simply today's Jeff Jarrett.

MK Avraham Burg and others tried to get the WWF broadcasts off local screens about a year ago, claiming too many kids were imitating their heroes in school hallways, leading to serious accidents.

Fortunately, the campaign

Coming to grips with the WWF

SPORTSWATCH
ARYEH DEAN COHEN

failed, because the WWF broadcasts are really harmless fun — if parents are smart enough to explain to their children what they're all about, as does Sports Channel with its warning broadcast telling kids not to try it at home or school.

At its simplest, wrestling is pure good vs. evil, with a twist: today's bad guy can turn good tomorrow, and vice versa; sort of like world politics. And McMahon and company are consummate showmen, coming up with plots most soap opera producers would kill for. And those rivalries! Brother vs. brother; Japanese vs. American; Indian vs. Cowboy; Undertaker vs. Accountant.

Personally, I preferred wrestling in its more innocent days, when Bruno Sammartino reigned despite taking an occasional cardboard suitcase over the head. But there's still nothing quite like seeing a bad guy get a flying drop kick right in the kabazza.

CNN International is more famous for its news coverage than sports, but lately Ted Turner & Co. have been offering World Sports, a half-hour sports roundup broadcast every day at 2:30 and 5:30 pm and at 00:30 am.

Recent editions included pregame interviews with the Miami Dolphins' Dan Marino, a talk with Atlanta Hawks coach Lenny Wilkens as he approached his record-setting victory, and an expanded scoreboard with capsules of NBA and college basketball.

Later, CNN also offers NFL Preview (6:30 pm) a great way to get set for the night's upcoming playoff games. Incisive analysis by NFL great James Lofton and co-host Bob Lorenz zips by faster than a speeding bullet, and the writing's got some bite, as in Lorenz's observation of the Steelers' running attack: "It's quite a rush for the men of steel." NFL Preview will put you in a Super mood.

Israel has tough foes in European hoops c'ships

ATHENS (AP) — Israel's national basketball team has been placed with Germany, Sweden, Greece, Italy and Lithuania in the European Basketball Championships draw which was held in Athens yesterday.

Joining them in Group A is another yet-to-be named team for the 29th championships which are scheduled to take place here this summer. Israel's first game is against Italy.

International Basketball Federation officials also formed the groups for the 16 teams that will compete in the World Juniors Basketball tournament to be held here between July 12 and July 22.

The top 14 European teams play from June 21 to July 2 at the new 20,000 capacity stadium located at the Olympic complex near Athens.

The first five finishers will also qualify for

the Olympic Games to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1996.

Initial rounds of the 16 teams competing in the World Junior Championships take place in four different cities throughout Greece.

Borislav Stankovic, Serbian general secretary of the basketball federation, said a tournament consisting of six teams including Yugoslavia will be held from May 31 to June 6 to determine the 13th and 14th teams to compete in the European championship. He said the venue of the tournament has not been determined yet.

Three teams from Asia in the junior competition will be determined after play offs in March.

The European championships held every two years was last played in Germany with

Germany taking the gold. The junior championships are held every four years and were last played in Canada with the US winning first place.

European Championships
Group A — Germany, Sweden, team X (1st team that will qualify), Greece, Italy, Israel and Lithuania.

Group B — Russia, Croatia, team Y (2nd team that will qualify), Spain, France, Slovenia and Finland.

Junior Championships
Group A — Lithuania, Croatia, Venezuela, Asia 2.

Group B — Argentina, France, Asia 1, Nigeria, Group C — USA, Italy, Australia, Asia 3.

Group D — Greece, Spain, Puerto Rico, Angola.

Healy fit to play against England

MELBOURNE (AP) — Australian wicketkeeper Ian Healy has recovered from a hamstring injury and will play against England in today's World Series limited-overs cricket match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Healy missed Australia's World Series win over Australia A in Brisbane on Sunday. The Aussies will, however, be without off-spinner Tim May, who has a strained right hamstring.

"Ian has passed a fitness test and will play," Australian Cricket Board media manager Ian Mo-

Donald said yesterday. "Gavin Robertson has been included in the Australian squad as a replacement for May."

Phil Emery replaced Healy at the Gabba Ground on Sunday but he will now rejoin Australia A for its next match against England in Sydney on Thursday.

England, meanwhile, was boosted when batsman Graham Thorpe declared himself fit for today's game.

Thorpe trained yesterday and said he felt no ill-effects from the severe dehydration.

Holon in 3rd-place logjam

RICHARD ZAACKS

RALPH Klein keeps waving his magic wand over Hapoel Holon as the hosts beat Hapoel Galil Elyon 89-85 last night to give their new coach his fourth straight win without a loss.

With the win, Holon moves into a four-way tie for third place together with Galil, Hapoel Jerusalem and Hapoel Eilat all at 10-6.

The game was a close-knit affair throughout with neither team able to sustain a commanding margin. In the first half, the two teams were no further than three-to-four points apart. Both teams started strong with Holon's Tomer Steinhilber sinking eight quick points and Doron Shefa calling the plays. The duo was matched move for move by the visitors' Terry Dozier and Erez Hazan, the former especially strong under the basket to keep the score close.

Five minutes before the end of the first half, Galil took a one-point lead as Oded Katash and Brad Leaf set up a brilliant play with a fast break. Not to be outdone, David Thirskill kindled his flame to bring Holon to 48 all at halftime.

The second half saw no letup from either team as Galil's Steve Malovic and Holon's Adi Gordon traded off shots until, with four minutes to go, the score was knotted again, at 74.

Holon then went ahead when Gordon was fouled and pulled off a three-point play to give Holon a 79-76 lead. But with 2:30 left, Leaf was fouled and now Galil was up 80-79.

Then Thirskill, Gordon and Steinhilber all scored key baskets and Holon found itself up by 85-82.

A crucial miss by Leaf and a foul by Hazan on Oren Aharoni with 32 seconds left pushed Holon to its biggest lead of the game at 87-82.

When Katash missed a 3-pointer with 19 seconds, the game was in the bag for Holon. Katash subsequently bagged three and Steinhilber finished the scoring for Holon's 89-85 win.

For the victors, Gordon was the game's high scorer with 24. Thirskill pumped in 19, Shefa 14 and Steinhilber 12.

For Galil, Hazan sank 22, Dozier 20, Katash 17 and Leaf 12. Darren Daye was sidelined for the entire match with a foot injury.

National Basketball League

	W	L	Pct.
1. Maccabi Tel Aviv	15	1	.938
2. Maccabi Pithon	13	3	.813
3. Hapoel Eilat	10	6	.625
4. Hapoel Jerusalem	10	6	.625
5. Hapoel Galil Elyon	10	6	.625
6. Hapoel Holon	10	6	.625
7. Be'er Sheva	9	7	.563
8. Hapoel Tel Aviv	9	7	.563
9. Maccabi Ramat Gan	8	8	.500
10. Maccabi Ashdod	8	10	.444
11. Hapoel Qatana	5	10	.333
12. Hapoel Haifa	4	14	.222
13. Hapoel Giv'at Ze'ev	4	14	.222
14. Be'er Ramat Gan	0	18	.000

SCOREBOARD

LOCAL RUGBY — Saturday's results: Galil Elyon 15, Kibbutz Yizrael 10; Ra'anana 30, Maccabi Herzliya 12; ASA Tel Aviv 24, Haifa Technion 12.

The Sports Pages are edited by Joe Hoffman

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TEL AVIV

DWELLINGS

Labor orders faction discipline for Arrangements Law vote

LABOR yesterday decided to impose factional discipline on the vote on the Economic Arrangements Law, in an effort to subdue faction chairman Eli Dayan's rebellion over the long-school-day amendment.

However, to avoid humiliating Dayan, the faction also decided that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would meet again with him and amendment cosponsor Rafi Edri in another try for a compromise.

It also voted overwhelmingly to have Dayan continue as faction and coalition chairman. Dayan has not formally resigned, but did ask his deputy, Ra'anan Cohen, to assume his duties during the past two weeks.

Dayan, who until recently insisted he would not accept anything less than extending the school day until 4 p.m., yesterday suggested a compromise whereby it would be extended until 3 in development towns and distressed neighborhoods next year (instead of 2 as the government proposed), and until 3 throughout the country the following year.

However, the government rejected the idea, refusing to offer more than it offered two weeks ago: a promise that it supports the long school day in principle and that it will set up a

EVELYN GORDON

committee to determine how to implement the idea.

After the meeting, Dayan said he would "have to decide" what to do if Rabin refuses to budge from this position and coalition discipline is imposed.

Rabin also said he was considering turning the bill into a confidence vote, in order to turn the screws even further.

Meanwhile, the government yesterday formally returned the Arrangements Law to the plenum, from whence it was immediately withdrawn to the Knesset Finance Committee. The committee must amend the law to make it retroactive to January 1, after which - probably next week - it will be returned to the plenum for its second and third readings.

The faction's decisions came after a stormy three-hour meeting in the Prime Minister's Office, which opened with the customary banter by Rabin.

No MK, he stressed, was elected personally to the Knesset, with the consequent freedom of voting his conscience this would entail.

"The mandate of everyone who was elected

belongs to the Labor Party," he said, according to a briefing by party spokesman Micha Lancry. "I'm against a totalitarian regime ... [and] I'm for democracy, but I am against anarchy."

"If someone wants [the party] to break apart, I will not be a partner to it," he remarked.

"We have turned a great achievement in education into a non-achievement."

Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer took a much softer approach.

"The disintegration began with the Histadrut elections," he said, according to Lancry. "We can't blame everything on Eli Dayan ... The time has come for us to sit down together, eat together, sing patriotic songs together... the choice is between collective suicide and victory."

Justice Minister David Liba'i attacked Dayan directly.

"If our chairman isn't willing to pass the Arrangements Law, he can't remain in his post," he reportedly said, adding he would only vote for the resolution calling for Dayan to stay on as chairman if Dayan promised to withdraw his amendment.

Who will pay Histadrut organization fees?

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

All employees of large private employers represented by the Economic Organizations Coordination Bureau (including the manufacturers, contractors, and hoteliers) on collective wage agreements, who are not Histadrut members, will pay 0.7% of their wages for "trade union services."

This includes workers on personal contracts who work in an organized work place. Since the benefits in the personal contracts are based on those in collective wage agreements, these workers will also be required to pay the organization fees to finance the unions which won them these benefits.

The organization fee does not apply to workers who belong to independent unions unaffiliated with the Histadrut, such as journalists, doctors, or teachers. These unions collect their membership fees separately.

Through an extension order to

be issued by the Labor Ministry, the agreements will be also apply to the civil service, municipality and university personnel, and other institutions in the private and public sectors.

Self-employed workers who opt to remain Histadrut members will pay NIS 20 a month, and pensioners NIS 10.

Histadrut Trade Union Section head Amir Peretz warned that employers who "act irresponsibly" and refuse to join the organization tax agreement will lose out.

He explained that according to existing extension orders from before the health tax era, an organization fee of 1% is deducted from workers' wages. All who join the agreement will be paying only 0.7%, while those who don't will continue paying 1%.

In addition, all of the various benefits achieved in the framework wage agreement will not apply to those places of work in which the owners are not part of the accord.



Zvi Tamari speaks yesterday at a yahrzeit ceremony in Tel Aviv for his son, OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Nehemia Tamari, who died in a helicopter crash a year ago. At right is Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Shahak, who also spoke. (Alon Ron/Israel Sun)

'Laws aren't enough to combat violence against women'

NEW legislation is not what is most needed to combat violence against women, Justice Minister David Liba'i told the Ministerial Committee on Legislation, which discussed the subject yesterday.

What is needed, he said, is a change in attitudes and finding resources to combat the problem. He proposed a continued multidisciplinary approach involving police, social and education workers.

Last year 19 women were mur-

dered by their husbands; in 1993, 22 women were killed.

"There is no need for a woman to be a victim twice over. A woman should not find herself not only the victim of violence, but forced from her home," said Liba'i, who proposed forcibly removing a violent man from the home.

The issue is not only violence in the family but violence in general

LIAT COLLINS

said Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein. "I'm very concerned by the recent reports that 'snuff' movies [which film a sadistic murder for entertainment] have reached Israel and about the violence on television at times when children can see it." He said the ministry was introducing a new program into schools to promote "tolerance and non-violence."

She said two new centers to treat violent men would be estab-

lished shortly.

"The system has failed when it comes to battered women. Statistics show that 75 percent of battered women return to their violent husbands because they have nowhere else to go," she said. Last year, 1,200 families passed through shelters for battered women.

"Police are placing the emphasis on letting victims of violence know they are not alone and can count on police defense, as well as deterrence," said Police Minister Moshe Shaleh. "But none of this will be enough unless there is a change in approach, unless men are shown it's not macho but despicable to beat a woman."

Absorption Minister Yair Tseban, who attended although he is not a committee member, said immigrant communities are often at risk because of the traumas involved in moving to a new country.

Finance c'tee leaning away from education investment in development towns

EVELYN GORDON

AFTER an initial wave of enthusiasm, opinion in the Knesset Finance Committee seems to be shifting away from replacing development town tax breaks with increased investment in education.

The 10% income tax break which most development town residents have enjoyed for the last several years expired at the end of December, and the committee is now discussing renewing it.

However, a bipartisan group headed by committee chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor) is advocating eliminating the tax breaks and keeping the money - some NIS 300 million a year - to improve education in development towns.

Gal argued that some 50% of

development town residents do not benefit from the tax break in any case, because they do not earn enough money to pay taxes. Furthermore, he said, even for those who do benefit, the break is worth only a few hundred shekels a year. This, he said, would not attract anyone to move to a development town, whereas a better educational system might.

Yesterday, however, the committee heard from several development town mayors, including Yossi Goldberg of Metulla and Gabi Kadosh of Dimona, who argued in favor of keeping the tax breaks intact. The mayors said that what the development towns most needed was to attract eco-

nomically stronger residents, and the tax breaks - precisely because they are aimed only at the more well-off - achieve this purpose.

The mayors were strongly supported by several representatives of development towns within the committee, including Shlomo Bubbut (Labor), Ron Nahman (Likud) and Sallah Tarif (Labor), and managed to convince a few MKs such as Avner Shiki (NRP), who had previously leaned towards Gal's idea.

It is still not clear how a vote would turn out, because this depends on who bothers to show up and on how other undecided members of the committee lean. However the committee will continue discussing the issue next week.

Supreme Court upholds sentence of psychologist convicted of sexual harassment

EVELYN GORDON

THE Supreme Court yesterday upheld the conviction and sentence of a Tel Aviv psychologist charged with sexually harassing his patients.

In 1993, Eliahu Fallah was convicted by Tel Aviv District Court of improper sexual behavior toward four female clients - three adults and one 16-year-old - and sentenced to four years in prison. The acts ranged from sitting the women on his knees and hugging them to licking them, having oral sex with one, and removing another's shirt and bra. Fallah was also convicted of obtaining his clients' consent under false pretenses, by telling them this was part of their treatment.

Despite having maintained his innocence in three different statements to the police, Fallah admitted in court to some of the milder

actions, such as hugging his clients, but insisted that this was part of the treatment - necessary to relax the clients and persuade them to open up.

He continued to deny the more severe accusations, however, and also accused the three adult clients of having initiated many of the questionable actions. However, the court found the clients' version, which was backed up by tapes of the visits made by one of the women, far more believable - particularly given the numerous contradictions in Fallah's testimony.

Supreme Court Justices Ya'akov Kedmi, Dalia Dornier, and Gavriel Bach said they saw no reason to question the lower court's factual

findings.

They also rejected attorney Avigdor Feldman's legal argument that the women's consent had not been fraudulently obtained, because the women "knew they were agreeing to sexual acts." The justices ruled, however, that since the women consented mainly because they believed it was part of their treatment, this was fraudulent.

The justices did agree with Feldman that there was not enough evidence to show that the women were psychologically incapable of refusing Fallah's suggestions, and therefore overturned Fallah's conviction for harassing the women under circumstances in which they had no option of refusing. However, they said, this was a purely technical matter, which should have no effect on the sentence.

Ayatollah bans Western soft drinks

IRAN'S spiritual leader has ruled that foreign soft drinks, such as Coca-Cola and Pepsi, are religiously forbidden, saying they contributed to the enhancement of Zionism, a newspaper reported Monday.

"Any act which strengthens the pillars of the arrogance and enhances Zionist centers is by itself forbidden," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in response to a general query put to his office. AP

Man sentenced to six years for mortgage scam

RAINE MARCUS

VATSALAV Somkhayeb was jailed for six years by the Tel Aviv District Court yesterday for defrauding banks and the Ministry of Absorption out of hundreds of thousands of dollars in a massive mortgage scam.

Somkhayeb advertised in the Russian press for immigrants in dire financial straits. He would then buy their mortgage rights from them, obtain the mortgage and purchase apartments. After a few days he would tell the apart-

ment sellers he had changed his mind and demand a refund.

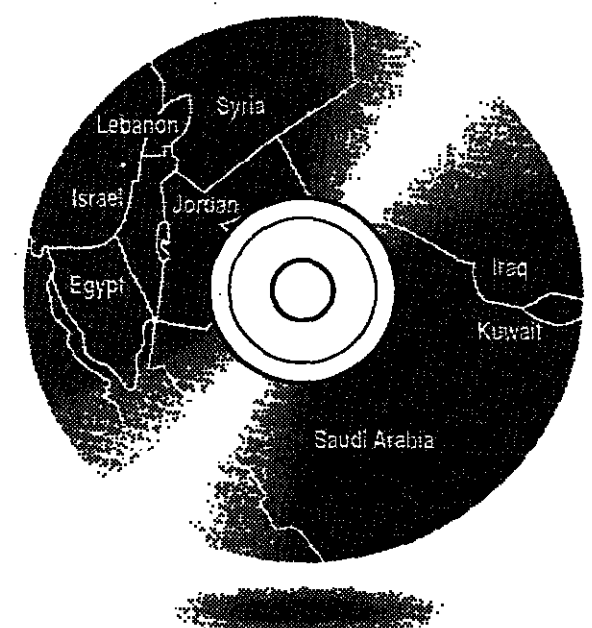
In sentencing, Somkhayeb, Judge Amnon Strashnov ruled that "the public interest obliges (the courts) to impose stiff sentences for offenses of fraud and forgery, when the results of such crimes harm both public institutions and private individuals."

In an unrelated fraud case in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yes-

terday, 24-year old Eitan Garia was remanded for five more days for allegedly buying millions of shekels of products from factories with bad checks.

Garia allegedly opened bank accounts in his own name and the names of fictitious companies and then paid by check for electronic and other items. Judge Gilad Neufeld ruled that if released, Garia might skip bail, adding he reportedly owed people hundreds of thousands of shekels.

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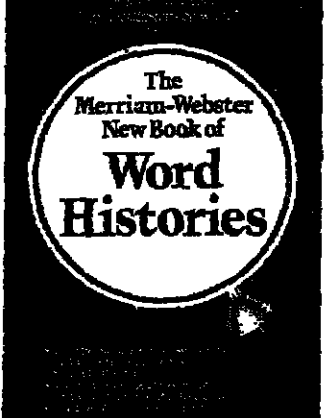
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